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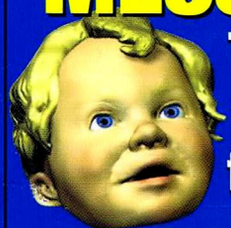

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COLIN McRAE RALLY
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HEART OF DARKNESS

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GAMESMASTER
ISSUE 71 AUGUST 1998

SOMETHING ODD'S GOING ON ROUND THESE PARTS!

Er, where am I? This is Marcus' bit of the mag, surely. Well yes, but he's left it all at my mercy. (Cue: Evil cackle...) We've locked the boy Hawkins away in a dark cupboard for a few weeks (serves him right for bogging off to E3).

The temperature is certainly rising around the GamesMaster office. It's got nothing to do with the weather or the heated World Cup debates we've been having. It's down to the amazing games that've been taking up far too much of our time this month. *Banjo Kazooie* (page 38) has been dominating the office N64 but for those of us less impressed by cute stuff there's the mysterious *X-Files*, see page 48, and the mean and nasty *Commandos*, see page 44. (Cue: second evil cackle.)

This month we also got our first look at a massive project that's been going on at Square HQ in Japan. Just turn to page 14 and you'll see what I mean. While in Japan we interviewed the head honcho at Sega to get the latest information on their new Dreamcast machine (page 6). There's already news about games in development for it... you can expect quite a few surprises.

Look what are you doing reading this? The issue is packed with gaming goodies – over 30 pages of reviews and over 20 pages of previews so get reading, will you?

Les Ellis

Our promise to you the readers...

- We always put the considerations of you, our readers, first – from the fairness of our game reviews to the accuracy of our tips and cheats.
- Here at GamesMaster we're all devoted game players and put together a magazine which we think others like us will enjoy.
- We always give scores as percentages and will not stop doing so – it's the most precise way there is to assess the various aspects of a game, and allows you to compare games accurately.
- We read every letter you send to us, and always answer the best ones in the magazine.
- GamesMaster is brought to you by the sound people that produce The Official PlayStation Magazine, Edge, N64, PC Gamer, PC Format, PlayStation Power, Amiga Format, Essential PlayStation,.net... and arseloads more specialist mags. So we get to call on the talents of the most knowledgeable people in the business – our reviewers are the best there are. They knows their stuff!

GAMESMASTER #72 – ON SALE TUESDAY 11TH AUGUST

EVERYTHING HAPPENS OVER THE NEXT 113 PAGES...

PAGE 14 – JUST DONE FF7? LOOK WHAT'S ON THE WAY...

PAGE 18 – SHINY GET NASTY AS EXORCIST MEETS MDK

PAGE 38 – RARE'S PLATFORM EPIC GETS REVIEWED!

PAGE 48 – A CASE FOR MULDER AND SCULLY

PAGE 51 – E3 – WHAT WAS HOT AND WHAT WAS GROT!

STAR WARS – NEW GAMES REVEALED! PAGE 24

TURN THE PAGE FOR THE FULL CONTENTS LISTING...

FRANTIC ARCADE ACTION

Link Cable compatible

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now loading...

INSIDE A BUMPER GAMESMASTER 71

FINAL FANTASY 8

Seven was heaven and we just can't wait for eight. Get the latest facts on Square's earth shattering announcement about their very latest PlayStation RPG.

PAGE 14

DREAMCAST

Sega's top dog in Japan spills the beans about their new monster console.

New games revealed! Star Wars comes to Dreamcast! Is Tomb Raider *on the way? Read it here first.*

PAGE 6

BANJO KAZOOIE

We've got our mitts on Rare's bear-y nice platformer...

Could it possibly be better than *Super Mario 64*? Find out in our massive six-page picture-packed review.

PAGE 38

MESSIAH

Earthworm Jim *creators Shiny are back, but this time they're getting mean and nasty*

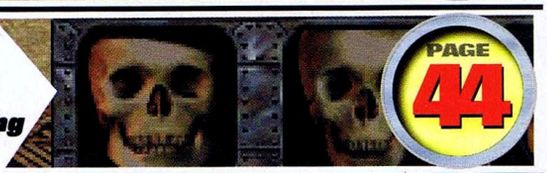
PAGE 18

STAR WARS

Two new games for the N64 and PC. **Rogue Squadron** *and* **Force Commander** *are here.*

PAGE 24

COMMANDOS



Come and see why this game has been causing so many late nights in the GM office.

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ALL THE REGULARS

HOT PREVIEWS!

You can't play these for a while but we've got over 20 pages crammed with the games of tomorrow. The future starts here.

PAGE 14

HUGE REVIEWS!

Over 30 pages of the latest games tested. Don't spend till you've read what the toughest reviewers have to say...

PAGE 37

GRIP CHIMP!

By royal command, the hairy one is back. More pads, wheels and bizarre add-ons go through the monkey business.

PAGE 92

TIPS & CHEATS!

Forsaken gets busted wide open while Consoletation and Secrets Service return to provide a total tips round-up.

PAGE 94

COMPETITIONS!

Win N64s with Banjo Kazooie or WWF Warzone, a PlayStation with WWF Warzone and loads of PC games and T-shirts.

PAGE 108

SUBSCRIBE!

Want to get GM before everyone else? Want it delivered to your door? Subscribe and your wish will come true.

PAGE 110

PLUS!

THE E3 SHOWGUIDE

A trip to America and hundreds of games just asking to be played. Ah, it's a tough life. We played 'em all and bring you the lowdown on what games you should be looking out for later this year, and early 1999.

PAGE 51

games network

GM covers all the latest news from home and abroad

SWEET DREAMS

THE STATS

Name:	Dreamcast
AKA:	Saturn 2, Black Belt, Dural, Katana
Processor:	128-Bit graphics engine operates at 200MHZ (nippy)
Graphics:	Power VR2 chip can handle over three million polygons per second
Operating system:	PC compatible Windows CE
RAM:	16MB (that's big)
CD:	12 speed (very fast)
Modem:	On-board 33. 6Kbps (speedy)
Joypads:	Available in red, yellow, grey and blue.
Launch:	Japan – November '98 USA – Late winter '99 UK – Possibly Christmas '99

SEGA SHOW THE WORLD THEIR NEW 128-BIT MACHINE

Sega threw down the gauntlet at the official unveiling of Dreamcast. It took place in a hotel only spitting distance from Sony HQ in Japan.

They showed several video sequences to demonstrate the Dreamcast's raw power. Sega big cheese, Shoichiro Irijimari, watched as his head turned into liquid metal. The demo of a 3D tower that followed, appeared rendered – but Sega wowed the crowds by showing that you could move anywhere inside the structure – just like a game featuring a certain Italian plumber.

What'll interest you more will be the images that were flashed on-screen. It was quick but we definitely noticed *Sonic, Virtua Fighter 3* and a racing game.

We told you the specs of the machine last issue but in case you missed them, they're above. take a look and you'll see that Sega have developed a beast of a machine that could crush any opposition. It's basically a high-end PC in a box, but at a fraction of the cost.

It's got four controller ports on the front and bizarrely there's no mention of the name Sega on it. The machine has no internal memory (unlike the Saturn) so everything will be saved onto the Visual Memory System (VMS) that slots into the joypad.

Sega have got over 120 developers working on projects at the moment including the teams behind *Ecco the Dolphin, Actua Soccer, F1, Star Wing* and *Bomberman*. Some developers have confirmed titles while the likes of Konami, Square, Namco and

SEGA SPEAK...

GM met the President of Sega Enterprises, Shoichiro Irijimari, to get the low-down on the Dreamcast...

GM: With the Saturn still going strong in Japan, will the Dreamcast be here by Christmas?

SI: We plan to release the machine in Japan at the end of this year but will keep the Saturn going as well. If there's demand for the Saturn we'll supply it. And of course, we'll support Saturn software development as well as the Dreamcast. We're planning to release between 150-200 titles for the Saturn. We're also encouraging third parties to develop on it. Some of them are thinking that there'll be less competition on the Saturn than there is on other hardware. With five million machines on the market, there's a good business chance for these third parties. In addition, third parties who have a good knowledge of 2D graphics may be interested in the Saturn because of its 2D performance.

GM: PlayStation is still dominating the market. How can Sega attract PlayStation players ?

SI: The performance of our hardware is superior to the PlayStation. The quality of Dreamcast titles will be much higher than for PlayStation. Most third-parties want to develop on Dreamcast because of its performance.

GM: Is the Dreamcast Western launch being held back in the hope that the PlayStation will be weaker by 1999 ?

SI: We recognise that business in USA and Europe is more difficult than Japan. The software development period is longer, approximately 18 months. When we launch the Dreamcast, we'll already have lots of titles to support it.

GM: As the Dreamcast is based on Windows CE hardware, do you worry people won't think it's a proper console?

SI: We believe the Dreamcast is the best game machine in the world, at least for a while. Technology is changing every 3-4 years so in the year 2000 there might be a more powerful machine. In the meantime the Dreamcast is the best games machine. The reason we're using Windows CE is very simple. We want to have a wider range of titles. The music will be one of the major elements of the games.

GM: Will Sega make Dreamcast THE RPG platform in Japan ?

SI: The biggest advantage of the Dreamcast is that it can provide movie-like graphics in a game. Think about RPGs,

Judging by the reception that the Dreamcast received, Sega could well have a world beater on their hands.

MORE GREAT GAMES!

THEY'VE ONLY JUST ANNOUNCED THE MACHINE BUT WE'VE ALREADY HEARD ABOUT THESE GAMES...

Acclaim
They're already talking about a *Turok* game. Before that though, they'll be working on *NFL Quarterback Club* and a baseball game.

Core Design
Believe it or not, Sony's exclusive *Tomb Raider* and Lara Croft lock-out deal didn't cover Sega's machines. So, if Core wanted to (and bear in mind they've had the development kits for a few months) they could produce *Tomb Raider 3* or *4* for it.

LucasArts
A Sega source tells us that all three of the new Star Wars movies will be turned into games to appear on Dreamcast. LucasArts won't confirm, but a space shoot-em-up or *Doom*-clone would be obvious choices.

Shiny
Have been having a lot of discussions with Sega about the hardware, but haven't got development kits yet. They are looking at doing something, probably using an enhanced version of the *Messiah* engine (see page 18).

Electronic Arts
They may wait until the system is launched in America but EA will definitely be bringing the power of the EA Sports range (*Madden, FIFA, NHL* etc) to the Dreamcast.

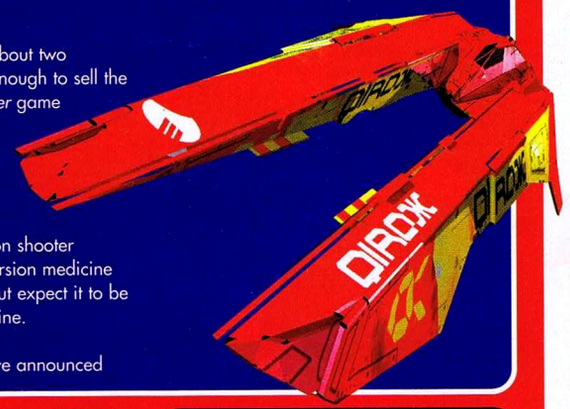
Sega Japan
They're currently working on a new Sonic game as well as football, racing, cycling and *Virtua Fighter 3*.

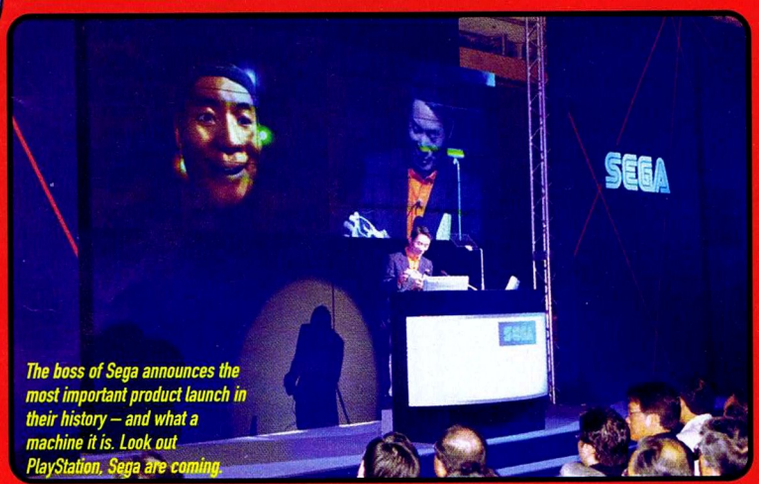
Sega of America
The Yanks are beavering away on a 3D shooting game and a racer that's going to be called *Metropolis*.

Capcom
Capcom are only talking about two games, but that could be enough to sell the system. A new *Street Fighter* game will appear in Japan and they're going to bring *Resident Evil 4* to the Dreamcast.

GT Interactive
The amazing PC first-person shooter *Unreal* is getting the conversion medicine from GTI at the moment, but expect it to be enhanced for Sega's machine.

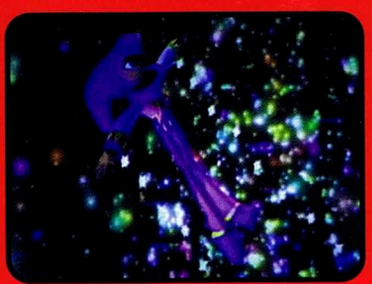
Psygnosis
Sony-owned Psygnosis have announced plans to bring *Draken* to the Dreamcast. Rumours are flying that a new version of *WipEout* will also appear.





The boss of Sega announces the most important product launch in their history – and what a machine it is. Look out PlayStation, Sega are coming.

Sega President watched his head melt into liquid metal to demonstrate the power of the Dreamcast.



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF DREAMCAST

Ever since Sega first launched the Mega Drive they've been plagued by rumours about new machines and add-ons. The Mega CD, 32X, Project Neptune, Saturn – some made it, some didn't. So what's the Dreamcast's history then:

Blackbelt – This was to be a 3Dfx-based machine but it got buried under a mountain of lawsuits and rumours and was eventually scrapped.

Dural – A Saturn add-on dedicated to running model 3 arcade games. Again, never made it but at least everyone knew a new machine was on the way.

Katana – Started to sound promising, but the name's rubbish.

Dreamcast – This is it. The 128-Bit monster machine. Loads of power, amazing 3D graphics, plenty of tricks up its sleeve. Could this be Sega's saviour?

Enix are all looking at producing for the system (*Final Fantasy 8* on Dreamcast?).

The Dreamcast is so powerful that Sega are even producing a new arcade board based on its hardware.

After the failure of the Saturn, Sega is going out of its way to spend money on development of software. Every developer is keen to get in on the action, which is a good sign for Sega.

they can be considered movies. In the past when there were attractive graphics, when you go into the gameplay, graphics suddenly change. But with the Dreamcast, realtime graphics will be almost the same as CG.

GM: Sega have always been the first in the past on the videogame market. Now you're the first one to release a 128-Bit machine. Do you think it is the right strategy again ?

SI: In the console world, there are three platforms: Saturn, PlayStation and N64. No one knows when they'll be upgraded to the next level. We'll do it this year. The PlayStation 2 might launch by 1999 and a new N64 in 2000 or 2001. It won't matter who launches first.

GM: How will Internet games affect the future of console gaming ? Is there a financial future in gaming on the Net ?

SI: All games will need an on-line option in the future. But for now, we can't make any money from on-line games.

GM: There's concern that the Saturn's performance may have an impact on the Dreamcast.

SI: Good point, we are going to have to show the gaming public that Sega is very serious and will do anything for its customers.

You'll notice there's no Sega logo on the machine – Sega just isn't as cool as it used to be.

GM: Now you've taken the presidency of Sega Japan what do you plan for the company?

SI: Since I became President, I've been saying only one thing: look at things from a customer point of view. We decided to be open and listen to our customers' opinion.

GM: Will Dreamcast attract casual gamers ?

SI: This issue will depend on titles we can provide. To get the light users or casual gamers we need to provide lots more 'light titles' (new genres).

GM: What publishers are signed for Dreamcast?

SI: I'm reluctant to answer that now, wait until September. We can say that worldwide 120 developers are involved in Dreamcast developments.

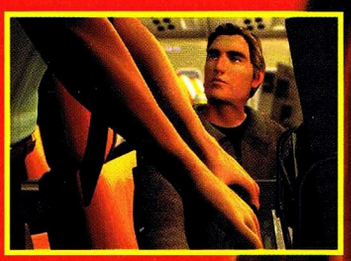
GM: What will be its release date and price ?

SI: It's too early and it's a sensitive issue. We're planning to sell a million by the end of March '99 in Japan.

GM: What role will your arcade guys play with the Dreamcast?

SI: Our arcade people are developing titles on Naomi, the Dreamcast-based arcade board. Yu Suzuki has achieved 3.5 million polygons on Naomi, which is more than Model 3. We expect lots of titles in arcades. The software can be converted easily to Dreamcast. But consumers won't be satisfied by simple conversions. They'll want more, and that's what we plan to give them.

D2:



DREAMCAST'S FIRST GAME REVEALED!

The place: Downtown Tokyo. The occasion: The premiere of Sega's first Dreamcast software, adventure game D2. Eager games fans started queuing hours before the viewing theatre opened. Finally, two sessions had to be arranged to accomodate all those hoping for a peek. Dreamcast guru and the head of developers Warp, Kenji Eno, ran the show during the hour and a half presentation.

D2 is a sequel to the Saturn and PlayStation adventure, *D*, and stars the same lead character, Laura. Stranded on a mountain-top after an air crash involving both terrorists and a meteorite collision. She must fight her way past deadly mutants and find the woman who saved her life. Originally envisaged as the Dreamcast's answer to *Tomb Raider*, Kenji Eno soon decided that it should be rather different, describing *D2* as more of an 'action RPG' and turning the combat sections into a 'shooting game.' *D2* will avoid the problem of random encounters (found in *FF7*) with enemies assigned to a particular area as in *Tomb Raider*.

The Dreamcast's first game looks stunning with Laura modelled out of 5000 polygons (2000 for her face alone) and 3000 snowflakes used to create the preview version's realtime winter scenes.

Interestingly, Warp haven't taken the multi-player/network route many expected. *D2* will be a one-player only game with the chance to download messages off bulletin boards. However, Eno doesn't discount the possibility of link-up or network games in the future. The game is thought to make good use of Dreamcast's powerful Yamaha sound chip, packing in lots of atmospheric nature sounds. Check out the interview with Kenji Eno below for more inside info on Dreamcast and *D2*.

Sega may not have been talking about Dreamcast games very much but this bloke is already shouting about his latest epic, D2.

STORY: TERROR AT 30,000 FEET!

In the gorgeous intro to *D2* our heroine, Laura, is flying home for Christmas 1999. As her airliner passes over Canada, terrorists seize control and discharge their weapons aboard the plane. As if that wasn't enough drama for *D2*'s creators Warp have also chucked in a meteorite storm (as you do). Needless to say the plane crashes into the mountains, where Laura awakes in an isolated hut. That's when the trouble really begins...

WARP SPEAK

After he'd finished showing off the adventure game *D2*, Warp's top dog Kenji Eno spoke to GM...

GM: When did you start to develop *D2*?
KE: Last September, we didn't have any hardware so we decided to do some research. We needed some snow but there wasn't any in Japan so we headed off to New Zealand. When we got back, the Dreamcast kit was there and we started work.

GM: The M2 console was ditched in May last year. Did you just wait three months and carry on with the same game?
KE: The M2 version of *D2* was an old project, we wanted to make something new. I didn't want to use buildings or machines... I wanted to make a game based on nature and I thought that snow would be much more challenging.

GM: Did you keep parts of the M2 version of the game?
KE: Absolutely not. It's completely different.

Laura may lack the vital statistics of Lara Croft but all of a sudden she's found herself to be one of the hottest properties in gaming.

GM: Are you using the same development team?
KE: Yes. This team made *D*, the M2 version and is presently working on the Dreamcast version.

GM: How many staff in the *D2* team?
KE: Around 20.

GM: We found few similarities between *D2* and *Tomb Raider*. Is the game system exactly the same?
KE: No. I played a lot of *Tomb Raider 2*, even if I couldn't finish it... In *Tomb Raider* you can't see very far but in *D2* you can see the background from quite a distance. But the fact you can see an enemy from a few hundred meters is a problem because you can avoid him. We started by implementing a system similar to *Tomb Raider 2* in February but it didn't really work, so we gave up and went back to our own system.

GM: Are you going to use the VMS or the Modem?
KE: We are presently wondering which to use. We have a programmer working on it but haven't decided yet.

GM: *D2* is a one-player game. Aren't you going to let gamers link two Dreamcasts?
KE: We didn't plan to link two machines. In the future maybe it will be possible to use a link-up. It would be good for RPGs.

GM: How many polygons per frame are you displaying?
KE: Right now we display approximately 30,000 polygons. We don't know exactly how many we'll use at the end. Dreamcast can display more than 3,000,000 polygons per second.

GM: Really 3,000,000 polygons per frame?
KE: Yes. It's very good when you want to use two or three light sources but at that time the number of polygons available drops. At the beginning we thought that, rather than using 50,000 or 60,000 polygons per frame, we should use only 20,000 or 30,000 polygons per frame with a number of light sources and effects. We showed the results to Sega and they liked it.

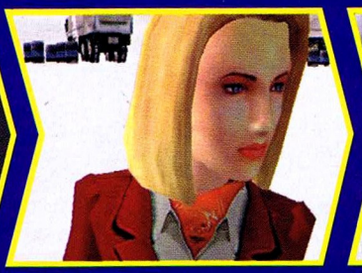
GM: How does the Dreamcast compare to other hardware available at the moment?
KE: Saturn and PlayStation display a little more than 3,000 polygons per frame. Dreamcast has about ten times this figure. Compared to the M2 it is three to four times more powerful.

HEROINE: DREAM GIRL

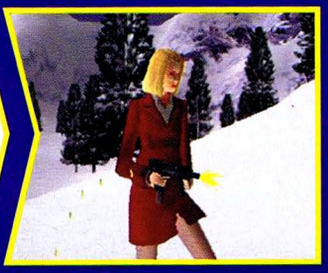
The first thing you have to say about *D2* is that it looks simply astounding. Female star Laura is beautifully rendered (Dreamcast can go up to 640X480 resolution) and a lot of attention has been paid to ensuring that her face can show a range of emotions (that's why there are 2000 polygons devoted to this area of her body alone – 40% of her total polygon count). The lighting isn't bad either.

"Why can't I crash somewhere near a shopping centre or at least a toilet?"

Light reflects off the snow onto Laura's face. Now that's clever stuff.



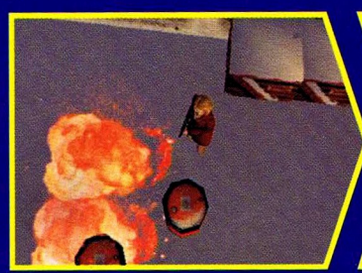
Laura displays one of the huge range of expressions available... demure solemnity.



She may be pretty but this girl is taking no nonsense. She's tooled up and ready to go.

GAMEPLAY: SHOOT STUFF

Obviously not ones to feel ashamed at nicking good gameplay ideas from anyone, this early version of *D2* incorporated some highly flammable barrels to show off the game's explosive effects. Naturally enough, as soon as our Laura saw the possibilities for firestarting she opened up with her sub-machine gun. Remember these are in-game shots...



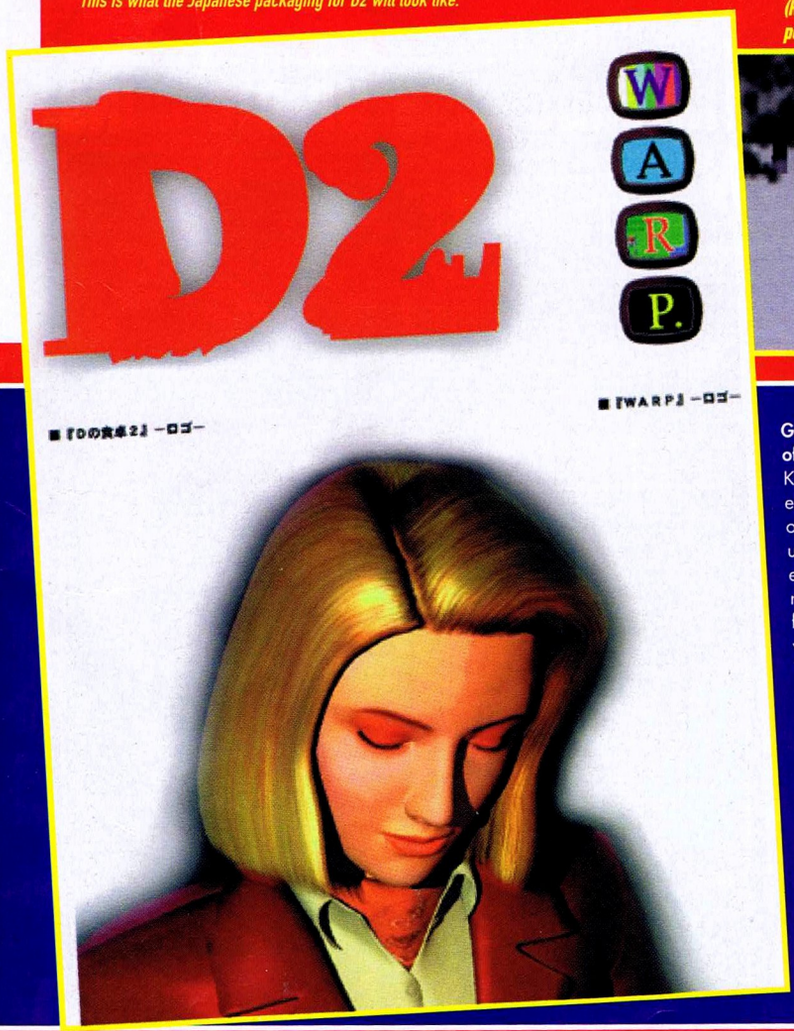
Why bother trying to push the barrels out of the way when one bullet sorts the problem.

Now that is what we call a realistc-looking spectacular explosion.

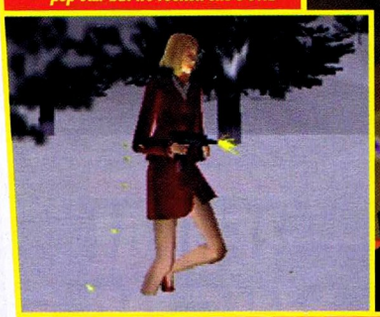
The explosion may attract the attention of anyone in the house behind you.

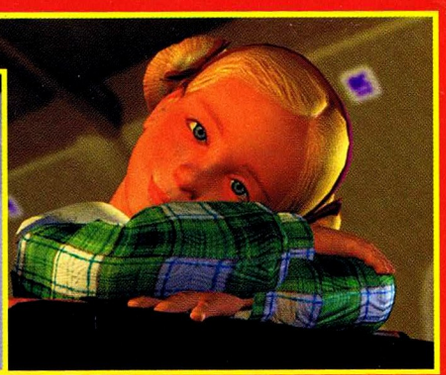
One down, three to go. In D2, the emphasis is on the action rather than pure puzzles.

This is what the Japanese packaging for D2 will look like.



(Right) She may look like some child pop star but we reckon she's evil.





GM: How do you make use of the Yamaha sound chip?
KE: For *D2*, we want to emphasise the nature aspect of the game so we are using lots of sounds. For example, when you enter a room, different sounds like fires and rocking chairs will be featured in stereo. The 64-Bit stereo channel is pretty good. Thanks to the excellent Yamaha chip.

GM: Are the development tools finished ?
KE: No, not yet. They'll continue to improve. Sega can feel more confortable now. With the Saturn, their tools weren't so successful. Worse than the N64 maybe. The PlayStation was very successful because of its library and tools. The hardware will be released in six months and the present version of the tools are fine.

GM: Why has *D2* been the first game to be announced? Why didn't Sega announce one of their own?
KE: There is no particular reason. I was informed that Sega were going to announce the Dreamcast on May 21st, so I decided to announce *D2* as well. I only heard one week before that Sega weren't going to show any games during their announcement. I would've thought that Sega would've shown their games before mine. I spoke with Irijimari-san who told me they wanted to demonstrate the polygon power of the Dreamcast. This time Sega wanted to get people's attention.

GM: How do you use the Dreamcast controller?
KE: The analogue stick can be used very easily. In fact, it's even better than the N64 controller which is a little too long in my opinion.

GM: What is the relationship between Sega and Warp?
KE: We're good friends. I am on very good terms with Irijimari-san. His daughter and my wife sometimes go out together. I think Sega's people are very nice.

GM: Do you exchange very much development information with Sega?
KE: Yes, I often see Yu Suzuki or Yuji Naka. They are excellent producers and designers.

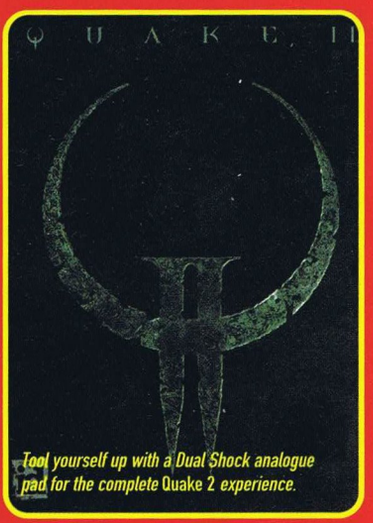
QUAKE 2 GETS PSX-Y

KING OF THE FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS IS COMING!

The words 'Quake' and 'PlayStation' have been speculatively linked together before, but for the first time we can confirm that Quake 2 is coming to Sony's machine thanks to Activision.

The huge PC hit (we gave it 95% in GM65) is just the injection of 3D blastery that Sony's console has been gagging for. After the classic *Doom* there have been a series of clones and wannabes but nothing to match PC titles *Quake* and *Quake 2*. Now, at last, PlayStation owners can get a taste of the blood, gore and smarter monsters they've been missing.

Quake 2's unholy host of cyborgs and mutants are not only meaner than *Doom*'s Imps and zombies but they're trickier to kill too, dodging and ducking your fire or running away if they're out-gunned. Weapons-wise *Quake 2* has *Doom* over an explosive barrel as well, featuring old faves like the rocket launcher, shotgun and BFG along with lovely new toys like the rail gun, hyper blaster and grenade launcher (tasty). Much tighter than the somewhat slagged-off original, *Quake 2*'s levels are more mission-based. While staying alive is essential so is completing all your objectives.



Tool yourself up with a Dual Shock analogue pad for the complete Quake 2 experience.

Of course, the big question is, how are they going to work the much needed multi-player option? Will it be deathmatch linkable like *Doom* or could it even have a four-player split-screen like *Quake 64*? We'll keep you informed.

Big guns, big aliens and ridiculously big body counts. That's Quake 2 for ya.

CODEMASTERS REVEAL CHRISTMAS LINE-UP

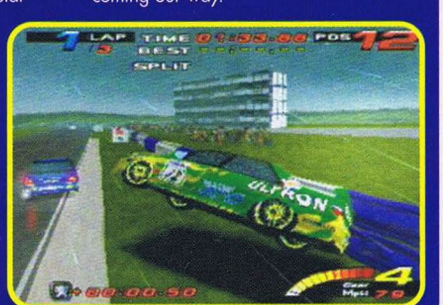
THEIR FIRST N64 GAME AND A FOLLOW UP RACER FOR THE PSX

Fired by the recent success of TOCA Touring Cars and the amazing Colin McRae Rally (see page 46 for the GM review), Codemasters have revealed their Christmas line-up to us.

Very much at the front of the pack comes the news that the ever-popular racer *Micro Machines* is set to debut on N64. Expect beefier graphics and best of all, Codemasters tell us that they're trying to get a multi-player mode that allows up to eight players to take part in a race (by having two players on one joypad).

A sequel to *TOCA Touring Cars* is in the works too for both PC and PlayStation, with graphics that are twice as good as the original. They are going all out to make *TOCA* the number one racing game, so watch out *Gran Turismo*.

They'll also be dusting off their Brian Lara license for a cricket game for PC and PlayStation featuring the West Indian record-breaker. Well it makes a change from having yet another footy game coming our way.



NINTENDO SIGN UP BIG GUNS

Nintendo have been waving their chequebooks and contracts around to get some more heavyweight names and games behind the N64.

The most important news is that at long last Capcom have joined the ranks of N64 developers. They haven't announced any titles yet but look for a *Street Fighter* game or a version of *Resident Evil* to be forthcoming. Ninty have also signed up the exclusive console rights to PC C&C clone, *Starcraft*, which we reviewed last month.

At last. With the news that Capcom are on-board, things are looking up for Nintendo.

There are plans to include a multi-player mode in N64 Starcraft.

TELSTAR LEAD ASSAULT ON CONTRA

KONAMI'S CLASSIC IN THEIR SIGHTS

Konami's PlayStation Contra game was a bit of a letdown and we all wait with baited breath for their next Contra outing.

But before they get the chance to release it, Telstar are sneaking in with a game of their own, that may well just pull down *Contra*'s pants and give a spanking for not being the classic shoot-em-up it should have been.

Their game is called *Assault* and features 40 huge levels where one or two players (on the screen at the same time) can go at it with all manner of alien invaders. Being a shoot-em-up it needs guns, and the developers certainly haven't pulled any punches in this department. It wasn't long before we found massive weapons, powered-up to ridiculous proportions causing all manner of death and destruction. It's basically an 'if it moves kill it and if it doesn't, well shoot it anyway, just in case' kind of game.

It's compatible with the Dual Shock controller and rumbles like an earthquake with all the fast-paced action happening on-screen. The action is certainly mental and the early version we got our hands on gave *Contra* a real run for its money. With the extra tweaks going into this one we reckon Konami may have to take a close look at their new *Contra* game to see if it measures up. We'll have more on this in the next issue.

The heroes of Assault. Their parents must be proud of them.

Explosions that make Schwarzenegger movies look like Children's TV and the kind of weapons that Saddam Hussein would sell his first-born for. Combine those with some mad-in-the-head action and a simultaneous two-player mode and we think you'll agree Assault *has the potential to rule the arcade shoot-em-up genre, at least until Konami get around to releasing their next* Contra *game.*

EA BOXING CLEVER

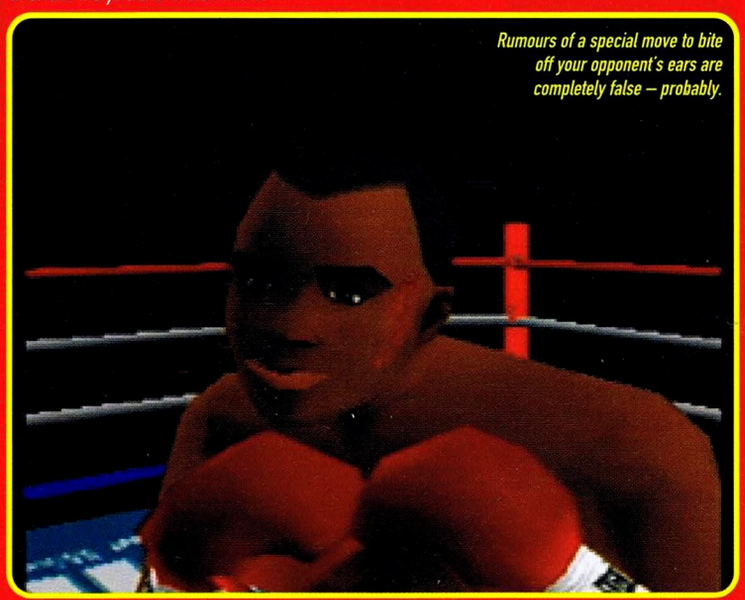
Electronic Arts don't have to chase a single expensive big boxing name for their up and coming game Knockout Kings – they've already got 38 of 'em.

The game is coming out this Autumn on PlayStation and PC and features the not inconsiderable boxing talents of legends Sugar Ray Leonard and Oscar De La Hoya – who were both subjected to the ritual embarrassment of being motion-captured for the game.

Other boxing characters that are being represented in the game include current champion Lennox Lewis, old legends Sonny Liston and Ken Norton, Marvin Hagler, Leon Spinks and Roberto Duran. Heavyweight kings Muhammed Ali and Evander Holyfield are also there.

So come Autumn you'll be able to quite happily beat someone's brains out without getting really yelled at by your local community policeman.

We bet if Frank Bruno was in here he'd get knocked out in two rounds flat by most of these guys.



Rumours of a special move to bite off your opponent's ears are completely false – probably.

HOUSE OF THE DEAD HITS THE BIG SCREEN

Sega have teamed up with Steven Spielberg's film company, Dreamworks, to produce a movie version of their smash hit arcade and Saturn bloodfest, House of the Dead.

The film will be directed by Bob Dylan's son and will be written by the team behind The Mask. No release date has been given but the storyline will centre around a bunch of zombies posing as trendy goths in an American school.

If Spielberg has anything to do with this it's unlikely to be the bloodbath movie it needs to be.

HANDHELDS: IT'S WAR!

SONY AND SEGA UNITS GO HEAD-TO-HEAD

Just when you thought the Tamagotchi craze was dying out, Sega come up with this creation.

The hardware war between Sega and Sony continues to rage with more details of both Sony's PDA and Sega's VMS hand-helds emerging. GM examined the latest Japanese developments and took a look at how the battle between the smallest games machines in history is shaping-up.

Square Back PDA

At their thirty-third annual stockholders meeting Square, creators of the *Final Fantasy* series, backed Sony's PDA. They announced that they would be developing software for the 'Personal Digital Assistant' although exactly what form this would take is still the subject of intense speculation. The meeting, in which they also went on to announce a whopping seven million sales target for the up-coming *Final Fantasy 8*, was the first time that any major software developer has spoken about PDA projects. The fact that the first developer on board is the mega-successful Square should give Sony's mini-console a huge boost.

What about the games?

Although at this early stage details are sketchy, it's clear that both systems will support Tamagotchi-style titles as well as sub-games that link into software on their respective super console. Sega's VMS ('Visual Memory System') *Godzilla* game grabbed our attention first as details leaked out about how players would raise and breed their own mighty lizards, then pit them against rival beasts on other VMS hand-helds. They could do this by plugging both units into a single Dreamcast console. News that Sony's PDA would feature an infra-red LED (like in a remote control) suggests that it could be more of a stand alone games machine, letting two PDA owners fight it out without the need for any Sony super-console intervention.

What else can they do?

Sony's hand-held appears the more versatile, with personal organiser and calendar functions planned as well as talk about digital camera software, possibly allowing manipulation of images like Nintendo's Game Boy Camera. The VMS still offers lots of possibilities however, as Sega say it'll work with arcade machines (like *Daytona 2*), computers and mobile phones. Both units can also be used during play on their respective consoles to act as 'discreet controllers' letting you secretly access say, an attacking formation in a football game, or maybe a special move you've learnt in a beat-em-up. You can also save your game on them.

So what does GM think?

Comparing the two sets of stats it's obvious that Sony's handheld packs more processing power. However, as with any new machine what really matters is the quality and quantity of software available. VMS seems to have a head start with its *Godzilla* game but with Japanese power-house Square behind Sony you can be sure that PDA will be impressive.

VITAL STATISTICS

	VMS		PDA
CPU:	8-Bit	CPU:	ARMT7T 32-bit RISC
Memory:	128K	Memory:	Flash RAM 128k SRAM 2K
Display:	48X32 dot LCD		
Display size:	3.7cm (width) 2.6cm (height)	Display:	32X32 dot LCD
Dimensions:	4.7cm (width) 8cm (length) 1.6cm (depth)	Dimensions:	TBC (but it's larger than a memory card)
Power:	2 X Watch batteries	Sound:	4-bit PCM
Sound:	PWM one channel	Power:	TBC
Weight:	45 Grammes	Weight:	TBC
Software:	Godzilla game	Software	New Square software, digital camera, personal organiser

Square will be making a big impression on this little machine soon.

BRUTAL NEW N64 'BALLER

There was a time when basketball games were all squeaky-clean trainers and endless stats. Then came NBA Jam. Almost single-handedly it re-invented the genre sticking red-hot arcade action up the shorts of the opposition and perpetrating the most outrageous sporting moves seen on any console.

Well now it seems the team that did *Jam* have moved on to American Football in the N64 game *NFL Blitz*. Hot from the arcades, Blitz side-steps realism, clotheslines simulation and makes a mad, bone-breaking charge for the end zone.

NFL Blitz takes the American obsession with sports injuries one step beyond the tasteful as you twist the head off running-backs, crush quarterbacks and generally maul the other team into submission. Surprisingly for an arcade game *Blitz* also features a large playbook of different tricks and tactics. The gameplay, we must warn you, is lighting quick.

Midway certainly have quite a track record when it comes to arcade conversions, and the N64 is crying out for more good sports titles, even minority ones. Fans will love all the licensed trappings and correct player names while everyone else should enjoy the lightning fast arcade action but will it be good enough to displace the mighty *Madden* franchise? We'll let you know.

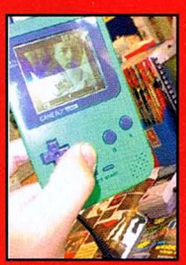
GAME BOY CAMERA

FANTASTIC NEW DIGITAL ADD-ON...

Ah, Mr Bond... there's something I'd like you to to see here. It's called the Game Boy Digital Camera. It can be mounted on both the Game Boy classic and the new Game Boy pocket and is now standard issue to all 'double 0' agents.

OK, so it's unlikely that Her Majesty's secret service is ever going to send operatives into dangerous missions armed with only a Game Boy. But this new digital camera add-on does have more than a hint of espionage about it.

Hey, what a freak! What does he look like?



Hang on a moment that's no freak it's me!

We hid ours pointing at Cathy's desk and caught her making phone calls, pulling faces and scratching her backside. Not one drop of work was done and now we have the evidence on 30 photographs taken at five second intervals, handy, eh Mr Bond?

At least we did have the evidence until Robin grabbed the camera and started to customise photographs of everyone in the office. Extra large ears, goofy teeth and zips across Les' mouth left him looking, well... pretty much the same really. But imagine the embarrassment Bond could cause his enemies.

Oddjob sporting little bunny ears or Jaws with a lovely flower in the corner of his mouth and a string of pearls round his neck. They'd never be able to challenge our personal freedom and liberty again... hurrah!

And their humiliation doesn't stop with a little photo-magic, oh no! Get some mad crank, hell bent on world domination, stored as the game face and you can get the blighter juggling balls, mixing phat choons and even appearing as the boss ship on a mini game of space invaders. (Take a look at 'Office Espionage') With the Game Boy printer attached you can turn all your works of art into stickers. Bond would probably use them as a calling card to put the fear of God into his foe or to leave as a momento for one of those attractive female foreign agent types.

If 007 really wanted to get arty, the Game Boy camera has plenty of features to let him do so. Mirror image and split-screen lenses let you produce some really freaky compositions. Panorama mode lets you take four sequential shots to capture larger pictures. There's even the possibility of delving into the world of film with the camera's animation feature. This allows the user to create a 47 frame animated sequence, interesting eh Mr Bond. (Available from 10th July Camera £39.99 Printer £49.99)

OFFICE ESPIONAGE!

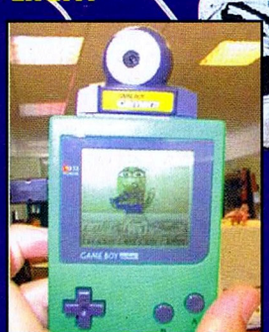
THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO TO INJECT A SECRET AGENT VIBE INTO YOUR LIFE...

Chose your subject, set the camera on time lapse photography then find somewhere to hide the Game Boy.

Little does Cathy realise her every move is being captured on camera. On the phone again, eh?

Then get ready to customise the picture you've taken. Mmm, nice fangs! Wearing contact lenses, eh?

Don't forget to print a mini sticker of your most prized snapshots. We'll leave this on Cathy's desk.

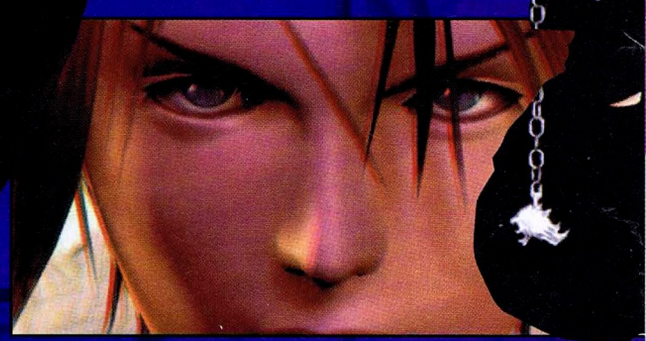


For total humiliation get your victim spinning the wheels of steel. This lets you create your own phat choons.

STAND BY FOR ACTION!

FINAL FANTAS

How do you top the epic that was Final Fantasy 7? By making the even bigger and more epic Final Fantasy 8. As ever, GM is here to bring you the lowdown, first...



GUNBLADE

Think of a weapon that looks really cool. Then think of a combination of a traditional revolver and a sword. Just don't think of how the hell it's going to work properly. That's the Gunblade - Squall Leonheart's new weapon.

We all knew it was eventually coming but no one was expecting it to be quite this soon. For crissakes! We'd only just finished installing Final Fantasy 7 on the office PC (and you can read all about what we thought about that on page 68) when news of Square's Japanese press conference for FF8 came hurtling down the wires. New characters, a new look and everything bigger and

SY8

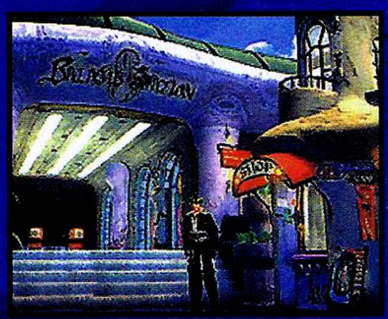
A whole lotta' loving

The theme of Final Fantasy 8 *is 'lurve'. According to* FF *superemo Hinobu Sakaguchi, it's because they want to emphasise the characters' expression and feelings. Square aren't saying anything about the story yet but one secret they did let slip is that Squall and Laguna are separated by 'different worlds'. It would seem that the scope of* FF8 *is far wider than ever before.*

Huge gun ships plow across the ocean in the FF8 *promotional movie. The CG is incredible!*

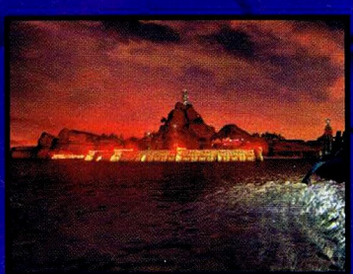
Our heroes wondering just what the giant dish antenna could be used for. Communicating with another world?

Proper proportions for all the characters in FF8 *mean a more realistic and Western look but the story and the enviroments are still pure Japanese.*



Amazingly enough, the detail in the backdrops has increased from Final Fantasy 7.

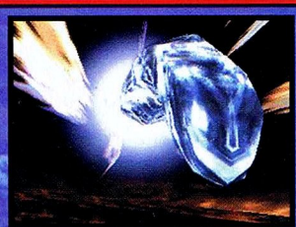
There are still three characters to your party as you wander around but this time they don't all merge into one.



Everything seems much more extravagant in FF8. There's less 'murk' and more 'flash' as Squall, Zell and Lenore explore a fantastic European-style city environment.

better than before. After a mind boggling 18.5 million sales for the series so far, Square are promising that Final Fantasy 8 will be the most important PlayStation game this year and who are we to argue.

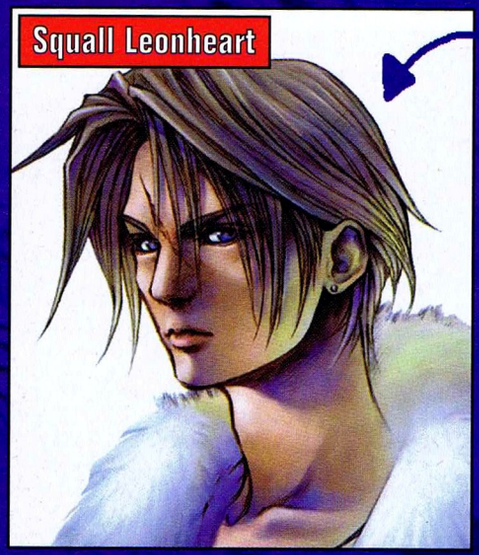
In Japan, the game immediately shot to the top spot in the 'most wanted' charts, toppling even the mighty *Dragon Quest 7*. That's right, *FF8* has a planned release date of this year in Japan. The States and the good ol' UK come a little later but as Takeichi Tomoyuki, Square's president was quick to point out, *FF8* would be far quicker to appear in English than any of its predecessors. Indeed, there seems to have been plenty of thought given to making *FF8* far more accessible to Western audiences. So, no dodgy Honey Bee clubs or characters wrestling with their conscience, then? Well, maybe just a bit. First to change is... well, everything really. Just like all the *Final Fantasy* games before it *FF8* has a completely new cast of characters and locations. No Cloud, no Sephiroth and no Mako energy. It could be on another world for all we know (or

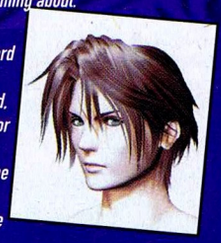


I'll be there for you...

It's not just the names that have changed in FF8, *but the way they appear, too. Gone are the anime-style 'big eyes, big head, little body' look in favour of a more 'realistic',* Parasite Eve, *appearance. No coincidence, then, that the character designer is the same Tetsuya Nomura reprising his role from* PE. *So far only two characters have been officially announced although two others – a blue-robed girl called Lenore and a mohawked guy named Zell – have been spotted roaming about.*

Squall Leonheart

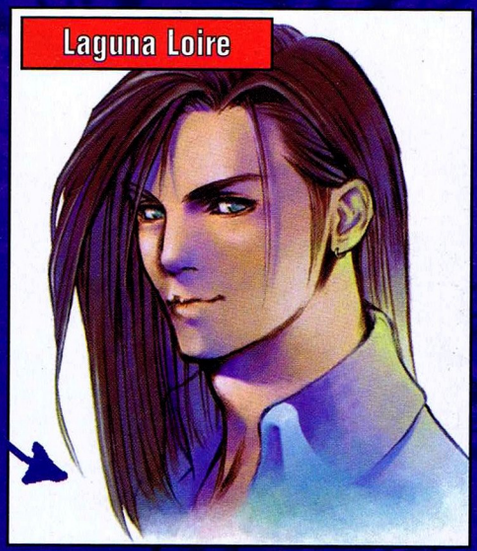




This handsome fella has been put forward as Final Fantasy*'s dashing hero but it would seem that the moody 17-year-old, with the improbable looking Gunblade for a weapon, is more like* FF8*'s Cloud – untalkative, a bit selfish and not quite the likeable fellow you'd expect to be rooting for. And where he got a scar like that is anybody's guess.*

And yes, before you ask, the dashing Laguna is a bloke, despite his somewhat foppish appearance. The opposite of Squall, Laguna is a, friendly, soldier turned journalist. Strangely, he doesn't appear in any of the screenshots released by Square leading us to believe that he's part of the 'special story secret' which (See 'A whole lotta' loving' box).

Laguna Loire

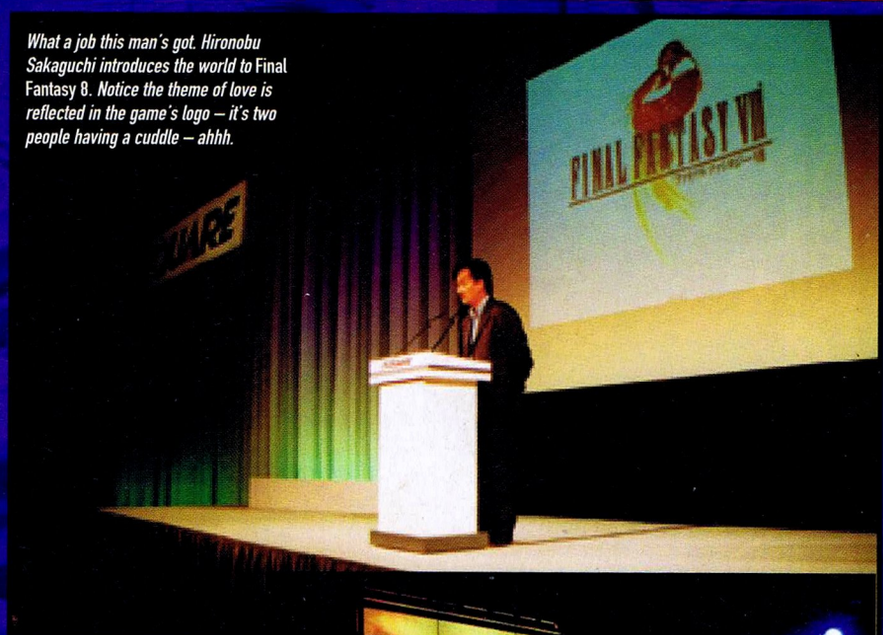


I call this meeting to order...

Where were you on Friday May 15th at three in the afternoon? Just finishing a hard week of work? Maybe gazing wistfully at the clock waiting for the weekend to start? Chances are, though, that if you were any kind of Final Fantasy *fan (and, of course, you had the slightest inkling of what was going on) you would have killed to be the basement of the First Building at the Laforet Museum in Tokyo, Japan. It was there that Square finally announced that* Final Fantasy 8 *was on the starting blocks.*

With a question and answer session by FF *producer Hironobu Sakaguchi and Square president Takeichi Tomoyuki that didn't really tell anybody anything, the real meat of the matter came in the form of video displayed on a giant screen at the back of the stage. Amongst the fleeting glimpses of the game in action it featured an attack on a seashore fortress (not unlike Junon Harbour in FF7) by naval troops and new hero – Squall Leonheart – riding the waves, on deck, while glancing at a map and experiencing flashbacks to being chased across a desert. To say that the level of CGI displayed was 'a bit good' wouldn't be an exaggeration, easily matching the best that Namco are producing.*

The conference ended by Square announcing that a playable demo of Final Fantasy 8 *would be included with their new action RPG –* Brave Fencer Mushashiden *– out in July. The States and the UK will have to wait until the Western release of* Parasite Eve *in the autumn, which will contain a rolling movie demo, and* Brave Fencer, *which will have a translated version of the playable demo, sometime before Christmas. We, literally, can't wait...*



What a job this man's got. Hironobu Sakaguchi introduces the world to Final Fantasy 8. *Notice the theme of love is reflected in the game's logo – it's two people having a cuddle – ahhh.*

Squall doesn't have his scar at the beginning of the game so there's a mystery straight away.

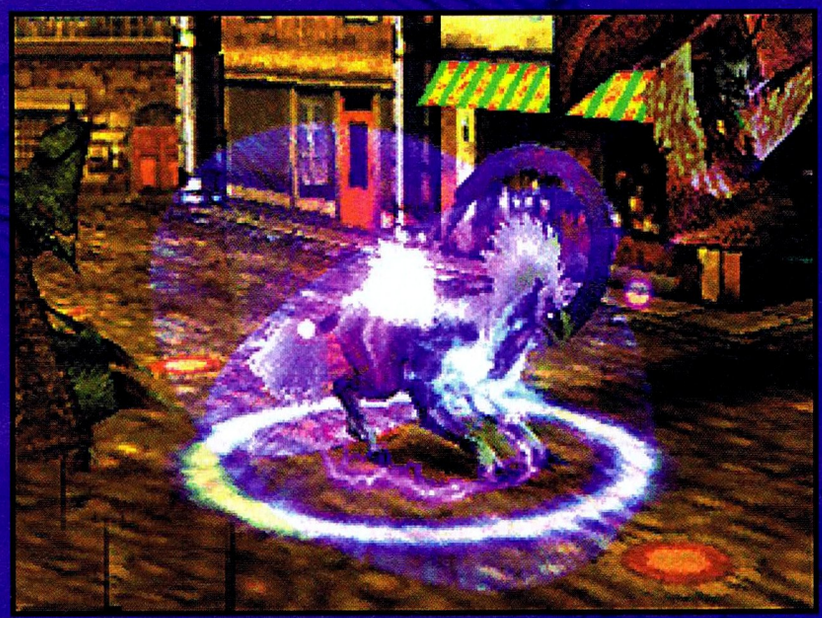
A quick glimpse of a battle in action. There's a strange 'GF command in the menu that's yet to be explained.

even more than one world – hint, hint). Although you can reasonably expect to find a few Chocobo's pottering about the landscape, and maybe even a pilot called Cid; some *Final Fantasy* traditions are just too precious to lose.

Reading between the lines – as usual Square aren't saying anything yet, plotwise – *FF8* seems to have a more airy-fairy, fantasy, feel to it. The technology's still there, a strange mixture of magic and mechanics, but everything from the buildings to the gunships, that plowed dramatically across the ocean in the dazzling movie shown to journalists in Tokyo, seem to have been put through the happy hippy machine. Everything's now all sleek, flowing, lines and a livery that's smacks more of a

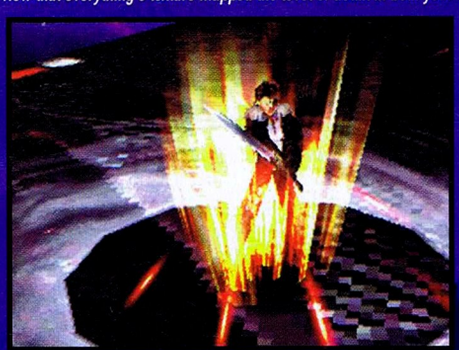
That's fighting talk!

We all know how important having a scrap is in the Final Fantasy *world and things are no different in* FF8 *but, still, there are questions burning in our fevered minds that must be answered. Random battles? Limit Breaks? And what about Materia and summoned monsters? Are they all still here? There's no doubt that the battle system in* Final Fantasy 8 *is pretty much the same as before. There's still three people to your party and the combat still falls into the 'turn-based' category although the fleeting glimpse of the battle menu we caught at the press conference only showed 'attack', 'defend', 'item' and a mysterious 'G.F.'. No magic and no Limit Break. But we do know that the monsters are back – the mighty water dragon – Leviathan – was shown in all his glory and will no doubt feature (as he did with* FF7, *last year) in the playable* FF8 *demo available later this year.*

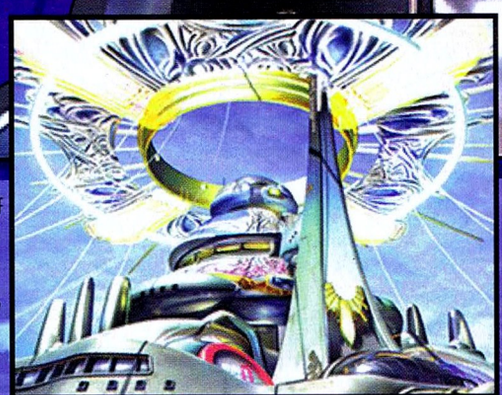


Special effects are bigger and better than before in FF8*'s combat. Expect to see the same style of fighting in the new game, too, although there's no sign of LImit Breaks, yet.*

Now that everything's texture mapped the level of detail in both your characters and the monsters they encounter has been 'upped' considerably.



The effect above looks like Squall is activating a Limit Break but so far the only crossover from previous games is the appearance of summoned monsters. Although how you go about getting them to join your cause is still a mystery. There doesn't seem to be any Materia this time around and not an Esper in sight.



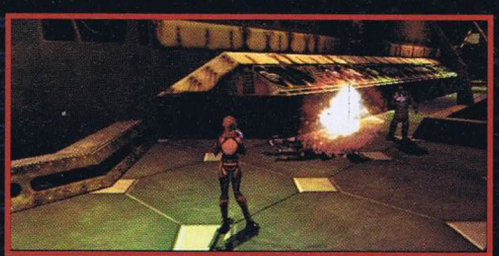
summer of love than the harsh mecha-grunge style of *FF7*'s Midgar. Elsewhere, the most noticeable aspect of *FF8* has got to be that everything in the game is now texture mapped – from the characters to the monsters they do battle with. Gone is the smooth, gouraud-shaded, sheen making everything blend in with the pre-rendered backdrops that we saw in *FF7* (even if things can get just a tad pixely at times). If you thought *FF7* looked good, just wait until you clap your eyes on this.

So, the *Final Fantasy 8* hype machine starts rolling right here. There'll be loads more pictures and plenty of info in GamesMaster as the months go on but, this is everything anyone's seen and knows up until now (and a few things they haven't and don't, too).

Wearing a large grin, and a not inconsiderable nappy too, it's surprising to find that Bob is able to float and swoop with the greatest of ease.

Guards aren't the only problem for Bob the cherub. He also has to make his way past some devious level structures and traps.

If in doubt, bite their ankles. Alternatively, possess them and force them to drop their trousers.



The lighting effects promise to show it all off in its best, erm, light.

HOT FROM E3

MESSIAH

Continuing their trend of rather 'unusual' game heroes, Messiah's champion is a cherub. Called Bob. Shiny Entertainment have some serious explaining to do...

One of the more acrobatic characters practices his film-star leap away from a bright light. The jessie!

We here at GamesMaster aren't averse to a bit of weirdness. Indeed, life would be almost intolerable if we hadn't got used to the sight of Les creeping around the office, carefully avoiding the spots where the sunlight creeps through the blinds, and mumbling incoherently about being, "Borne of a jackal in the light of the full moon."

Strange sights are rife in the GM office, but none more so than the glimpse we got of Shiny Entertainment's forthcoming game – the latest of Dave Perry's offspring, the 'gorgeous' *Messiah*.

For a development team located in the luxurious and sun-drenched surroundings of Laguna Beach, California, it's perhaps strange that Shiny's output has been so... well, *odd*. We've got them to thank for the original *Earthworm Jim*, its sequel, and the mystifying *MDK*, and *Messiah* looks like upholding their notorious tradition of always coming up with

Character Assassination

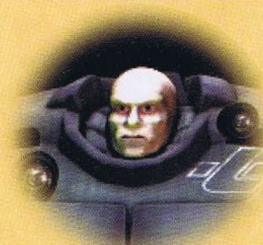
The motley crew who make up Messiah*'s cast list are as unique as they are bizarre. We haven't seen such an odd group since Les invited his friends out for a drink with us. Each have their own special strengths, weaknesses. All have a penchant for dressing like loons.*

Prostitute *Most likely found down the docks, plying their illicit trades to bored sailors. When not involved in sailor-related activities, these characters can be employed for their devastating wiggle, an apparent dislike of outer garments, and a tendency to gossip. Probably.*

Bloke in tights *Aside from probably being modelled on our Robin's Saturday night outfit, bloke in tights is actually a lot harder than he looks. Cherubs cower before nylon-encased legs, while less hirsute members of the population fear his asexual persona. Dodgy.*

Beast *Looking like a reject from the WWF, Beast's steel rod-supported legs make him ideal for use as a getaway man. Simply fly into his back, and get those robo-enforced limbs movin'. Just never try to get through customs as Beast. The metal detector's hate him.*

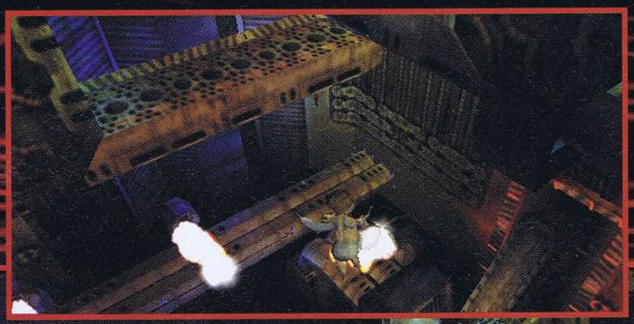
Bob the Cherub *Short for Robert, no doubt, Bob's your archetypal cherub on a mission. Hoists up his swaddling clothes, fights the horny old devil, and still gets back home in time for unleavened bread and a couple of verses of 'Amazing Grace'. The winged kid's a genius.*

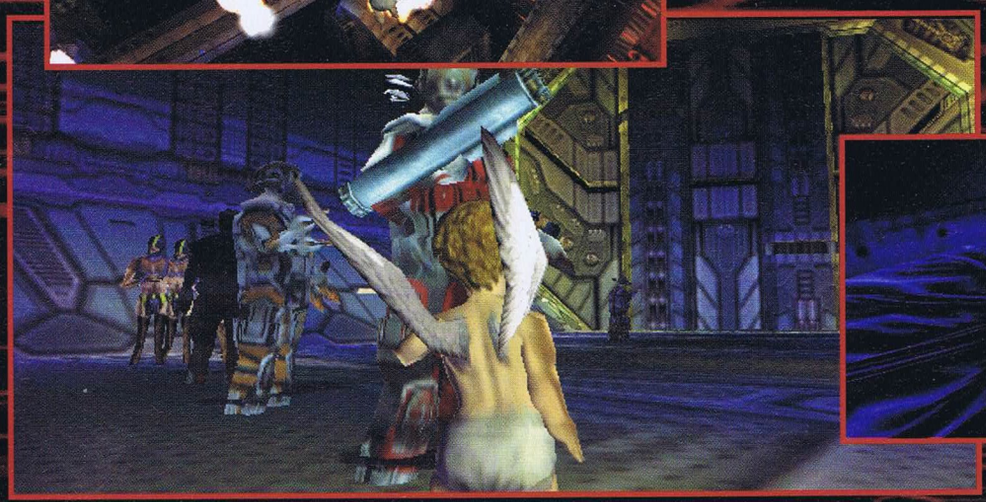


Armoured Beast *He may look like a Transformer, but this Beast is a lot harder than those plastic robots/dinosaurs of the past. With a metal exoskeleton as protection, the Beast can certainly withstand the puny fists of a cherub. Better find someone to possess, quickly.*

Gorgeous visuals belie the hideous violence that's about to kick off.

There's no need for that fur coat – Bob's cool in just his pants.





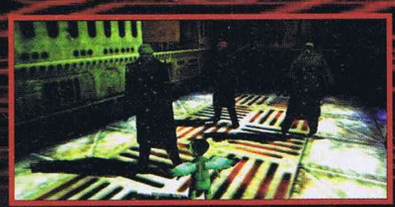
Bob contemplates jumping into the pit of a very blue hell. Don't do it!

something that's just a a little bit different.

Messiah, then, is best described as a third person, shoot-em-up/possession game. Kind of *MDK* meets The Exorcist (ooh! Now I'm interested! – Les). And if you think that sounds weird, then bear in mind that the character you play is a cherub. Y'know, a small baby with wings – like Cupid, only a bit less romantic.

Forget all you know about existing third-person games like *Tomb Raider* though, for your best weapon in *Messiah* is the fact that you can physically take over enemies. That is, you can get inside their bodies and start controlling them. That may sound a wee bit rude to the more puritanical of you, but worry not. The only way you can force entry into another character is by flying into the back of them. Straight in between the shoulder blades, making sure you don't bang your head on their thoracic vertebrae.

Of course, no self-respecting baddie is going to simply let you fly into their body and start messing with their delicate innards – so you have to be a bit sneaky. Creep up on them when their back's turned, make sure you're not spotted by any of their mates, and you're in. Once you've taken control of somebody else



On high-end PCs, the graphics will be stunning – on a P90 it'll look and run more like a Spectrum.

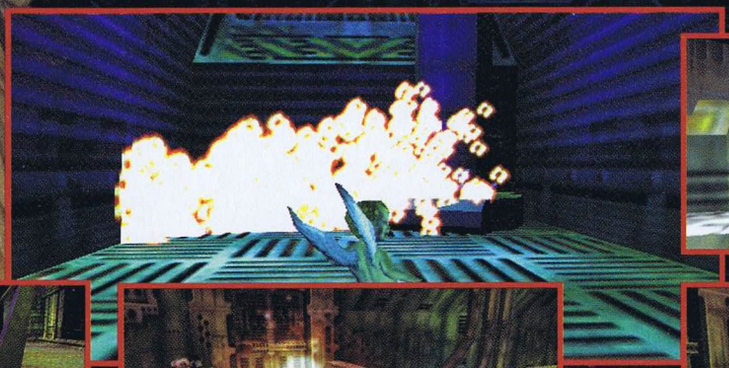
It may be dark – but that only adds to the atmosphere. Spooky.

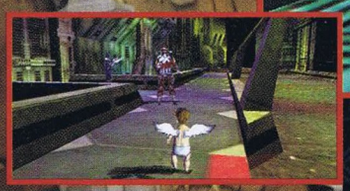
Dwellers *These are your common or garden guys and gals who populate the Blade Runner-style landscapes. Not particularly tough or quick (we don't reckon), but there's bound to be a lot of them to make up for their puny strength.*

Female Cops *Women in uniform are popular here at GM. But while nurses may be our preferred variety, female rozzers will do just fine. In* Messiah, *they're a formidable force, with a tendency to shoot first and ask questions later. Not the kind of girl you want to get tangled up with.*

Leopard-print walkways sit uneasily with the industrial-style locations. Messiah's a mind-expanding experience if nothing else.

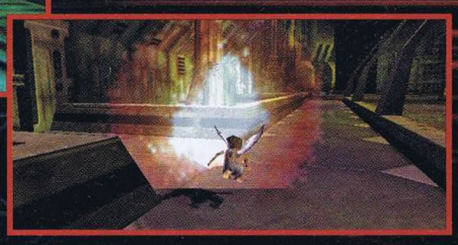
The cop tries to exert her authority on a beast – who simply laughs at her.





A Mexican stand-off between Bob and a guard. The clever money's on Bob the cherub.

Bob gets stuck in scenery – the perils of early code.



One of Messiah's characters demonstrates that fashion sense isn't going to improve in the future. But will they be wearing it in the High-Street?

– then the game starts to get really interesting.

"Say you need to get past a load of soldiers with guns," begins Shiny's head honcho, Dave Perry. "There's no way as a little baby you can put up any kind of fight. So you'll need to take one of them over – then decide on a strategy."

These are all naturally pretty horrific; from opening fire on other soldiers, to walking suicidally into a large mincing machine – it's your task to do whatever it takes to get rid of the opposition.

Of course, if you're stuck in a dying person, you're going to go down in flames (or whatever fate awaits them) – so once your chosen host is well on the way to dying, simply fly out of him and watch as he screams in agony on the floor.

If it all sounds rather bloodthirsty, that's probably because it is. Or as Perry diplomatically puts it; "It's got the potential to be a very, very violent game."

Unreal and the next generation of first-person shooters may be pushing back the boundaries as far as realism is concerned, but *Messiah* seems to have the cornered the market when it comes to worryingly extreme violence.

Even though *Messiah* is still at an early stage in development, the skeleton of the game is there. Technology wise, it's looking as if Shiny's baby will still be around, in some form or another, way after the game's lifespan has elapsed.

The game engine itself has been licensed out to third parties (in much the same way as *Quake* and *Unreal*'s technology), allowing other developers to create games using the system. It's causing a lot of interest because both the animation and character modelling in *Messiah* are second to none.

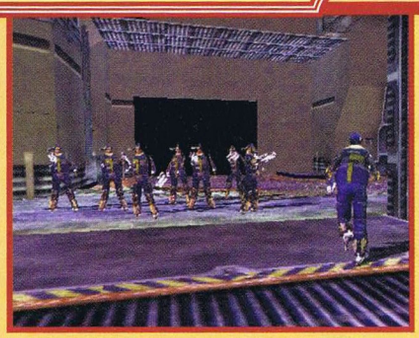
Unlike models in other games (which use hundreds of small polygons to make up characters), *Messiah*'s characters each have their own 'skeleton', over which 'skins' are stretched – drastically reducing the sharp edges that define other games, and creating far more realistic smooth shapes and flowing movements.

Even more excitingly for PC gamers though, is the fact that the engine is fully 'scaleable' – a fancy term that means the game only uses as much of your hardware as it has to. This will hopefully avoid the problem of *Unreal*, which required a PC of gargantuan specs to simply get running.

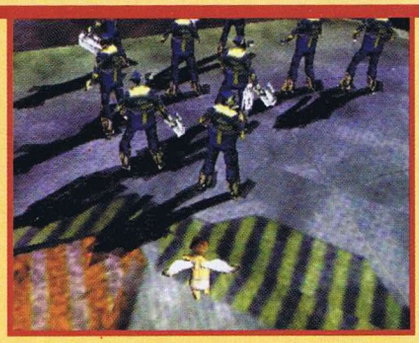
Basically, if there's a character's near you, it'll always be displayed at its best – using as much detail as it can, while

Possession is the law

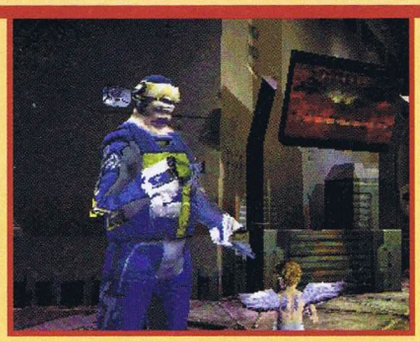
Unlike the majority of third-person shoot-em-ups, Messiah *allows you to control as many characters as can be found in the game. By simply flying up behind them and jumping 'into' their backs, you immediately gain that character's strengths, weaknesses and any object they're carrying. When you possess another creature, even his mates don't know you're there – until you start opening fire, that is.*



A large group of soldiers looks like presenting a big problem. How to get past them?

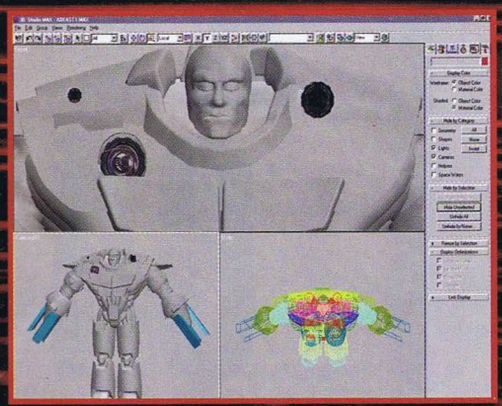


Using your wings to gain height, fly down on top of them when they aren't looking...



...and try to concentrate on just one of them – the nearest and ugliest one in this case.

A kindly guard turns a blind eye to a trespassing cherub. Bob's bribed him with a years supply of GamesMaster, no doubt.



And here's one without his clothes on. The Messiah editor is a powerful beast, making even the mighty Tony Hart look weak by comparison.

Now with wings – for your comfort

The very fact that you've got wings adds another dimension to the game. Rather than simply scuttling around, peering past corners and strafing to avoid enemy fire, you can take off, soar above your victims heads, and drop in unexpectedly behind them. The game's puzzles will also require exploration – often meaning you'll have to take to the skies to seek out your next task.

When faced with a couple of not so pleasant adversaries, the first thing you should do is run away. Take off, using the scenery as cover, and float down behind the gunmen.

This has to be the perfect place for a couple of soldiers on toast. An industrial flame-thrower's just begging to be taken advantage of, so walk those fellas into the flames.

This is exactly the vantage point you're after. High enough to avoid detection, and with the hapless guards looking elsewhere.

With such a complex environment to explore, you'll need your wings to gain entry to high-up nooks and crannies.

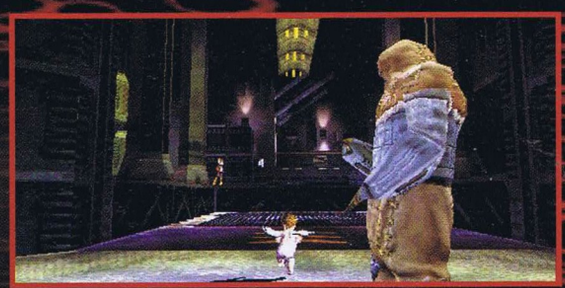
the further away the character goes, the less detail will be shown. It sounds obvious, but so far few people have utilised this approach that's said to seriously increase the speed and fluidity of the game, especially on the PlayStation.

It's a perfect technique to best display the scantily-clad prostitutes that feature in the game – their womanly attributes bouncing and swaying as they walk. While the chubby model of the cherub himself (he's called Bob remember?), looks as fleshy and smooth as you, erm, might expect a cherub to look.

Expect a typically bizarre Shiny storyline to back up the game too. The action all takes place on Earth – with industrial landscapes appearing to be the order of the day. You fight the 'good' role, in the classic good vs evil tussle that sees you battling hordes of Beezlebub's minions before finally taking on the horned one himself.

Less is known about how the game might be structured. Obviously, a 'find the key to progress to the next level' approach may be the order of the day. But if it is, Perry's not saying. Well, not yet at least.

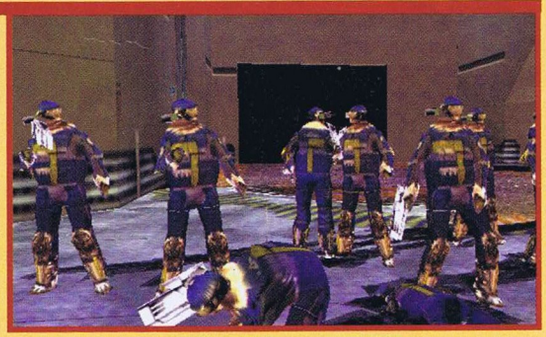
Most likely, the cherubic role will, in actuality, play a rather small role in the game, with the tooled-up musclemen you meet en route being utilised for the combat sections. Whichever direction Shiny decide to take the gameplay though, you can be assured that *Messiah* is something special to watch out for. Even Les, who fears anything even remotely angelic, is becoming excited in his usual otherworldly style. He's a strange boy.



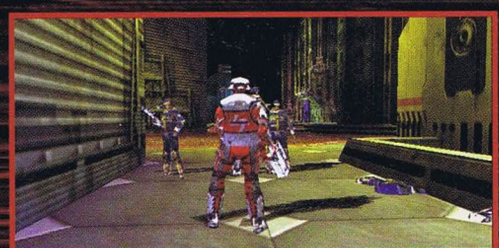
He's big, he's round, etc. Make him bounce (or splat) by throwing him off a ledge.

An empty warehouse, yesterday. Who would live in a place like this?

Stay low to avoid his line of sight, and circle him to gain access to his back.



Now you're in, it's up to you to decide what to do. Why not mow down all the other soldiers?



Note the accurate shadows cast by the game's characters. These are dynamic, and change according to the position of the lighting.

4 X THE FUN!

It's an ambitious project turning a classic, single-player racer like Wipeout *into the fastest multi-player racer on earth. Like* Mario Kart *the screen is split four ways with a window for each driver. Four-player racing in* Wipeout *is made rather more complex by the severe bendiness of the tracks: snaking up and down as well as left and right. At the moment there doesn't appear to be any loss of speed between the single and multi-player games although we'll reserve judgement for the final version.*

More weapons than the PlayStation version.

Anticipating the turns is trickier in four-player.

Don't bump into your rivals or you'll slow down.

A handy shield ensures you don't get shot off the bridge.

E3 GOLD WIPEOUT 64

A GUT-WRENCHINGLY FAST FUTURISTIC RACER? A PSYGNOSIS STUNNAH ON N64? YOU BET, AND WE PLAYED IT AT E3...

Copyright Psygnosis UK

Anyone trying to cut the atmosphere with a knife would have severed the limbs of several games journalists the room was so packed. The reason? Our first crack at droolsome new racer Wipeout 64.

Yes, it looks like N64 owners' excruciating wait for a decent racing game is finally over as Psygnosis do the biz with their very first title for Nintendo. As expected, rather than anything radically new Psygnosis have stuck to the classic *Wipeout* format, levitating sleds driven at a ridiculous whack over neon-lit, twisty-turny circuits. Yet N64-fans needn't feel short-changed as *Wipeout 64* features six brand new circuits, five new super-weapons and a split-screen, four-player a lá *Mario Kart*. It's obvious from playing even this early version that it's a game the N64 pad could have been made for. Psygnosis have developed the controls of the PlayStation original so that now pressing Up to drop your sled's nose radically reduces its airtime on jumps while pulling Down gives a slower but much smoother landing.

The massive explosions and stunning special effects may not have been put in yet but the four-player looks solid. There's already plenty of fun to be had racing fin-to-fin round the turns or delivering a missile at close range up a rival's jacksie. The only real question is whether this new version can be doctored to perform significantly faster than the PlayStation's *Wipeout 2097*'s already ferocious Phantom class. Time to save up for those digital stopwatches.

TWICE AS TRICKY!

While the four-player game is attracting all the attention, two-player Wipeout 64 *could be almost as enthralling. Thanks to the wider view it's far easier to see tricky sections of the track coming up, as well as spotting your opponent in the distance and winding up for a bit of Quake-age (the Quake weapon produces a rippling shockwave that throws rival sleds high into the air).*

It's much easier to judge the corners in two-player.

Will the finished game out-race the PlayStation version?

WIPEOUT 64

Get turned around and there's no way back into it.

Expect improved lighting effects, this arse beacon will be a lot shinier, honest.

Let your brain turn to jelly as the auto-pilot takes over... for a few seconds anyway.

All-new tracks and all-new scenery but the same spanking gameplay.

Neon-lit tunnels, always a fave with the Wipeout boys. Taking the right exit line is crucial to your lap-time.

Relax in the forest then lose your lunch on the next bend.

EARTHWORM JIM 3D™

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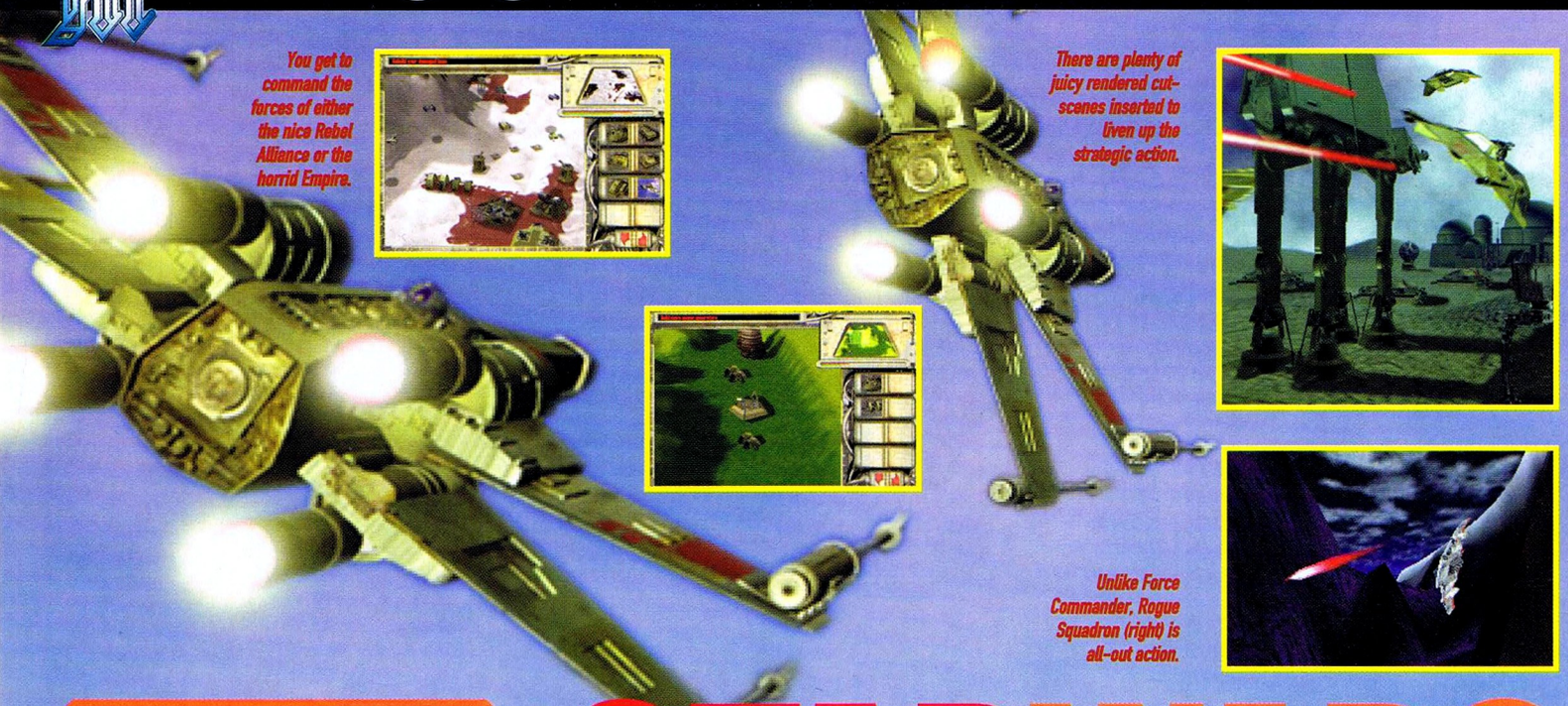


You get to command the forces of either the nice Rebel Alliance or the horrid Empire.

There are plenty of juicy rendered cut-scenes inserted to liven up the strategic action.

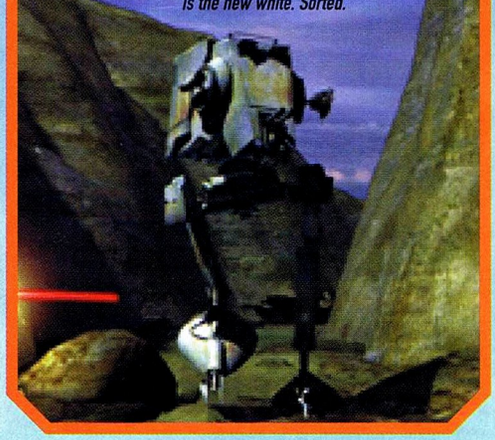
Unlike Force Commander, Rogue Squadron (right) is all-out action.

STAR WARS SPECIAL

Just in time for the prequel film, LucasArts unveil two new games guaranteed to get your light sabre buzzing...

Imperial Leather

One great thing about Force Commander *is the chance to play as the evil Empire as well as the heroic rebel forces giving, rather like the NOD/GDI pairing in* C&C*, two challenges in a single game. We all know how successful the* TIE Fighter *series was, mainly because (even when you got the choice in* X-Wing vs TIE Fighter*) everyone wanted to be one of Darth Vader's henchmen. Let's face it, Walkers can have Snowspeeders any day of the week and sure look cleverer and prettier proving that black really is the new white. Sorted.*



You get to control airborne as well as ground forces from both sides.

STARWARSFORCECOMMANDER

We could sum up Force Commander in just six words; Command & Conquer goes Star Wars. But naturally that would be unprofessional, not to say a tad unfair on our part – yes it does look like C&C with Stormtroopers but there's rather more to LucasArts' latest than that.

Spanning a quite mind-boggling amount of time from the destruction of Alderaan (Star Wars: A New Hope) to the fall of the Empire (Return of the Jedi) you get to play as a leader of either the goody-goody rebels or the dastardly Imperial forces. Before you can cry, "Now I am the master!" you'll be sucked into a variety of missions ranging from a tactical retreat at the Battle of Hoth to capturing key installations or establishing a base deep in Darth country. Combat takes place in a 3D realtime setting and, as you'd expect, there are over 100 different Star Wars units to build including Stormtroopers, rebel soldiers and droids plus never-before-seen tanks, missile launchers and transports. Order in your AT-ATs and AT-STs, call in an air-strike from your Y-Wing or TIE Bomber squadrons, the tactical options are almost as drool-worthy as Princess Leia in her slave girl outfit. (Your Jedi mind tricks will not work on me – Ed)

The game is split up into chapters with each on average featuring three separate missions. You might find yourself posted to the steamy forests of Yarin 4, the arid deserts of Tatooine or the lush grasslands of Corellia. Wherever you are, you'll be expected not only to command your forces in battle but to manage all the resources needed to wage war. *Force Commander* will be just one of a vast armada of 3D *Command & Conquer*-clones arriving on the PC this Winter but as ever the lure of Star Wars will ensure that it gets an audience other strategy games haven't got a (new) hope of reaching. (These are not the droids you're looking for – Ed)

STARWARSROGUESQUADRON

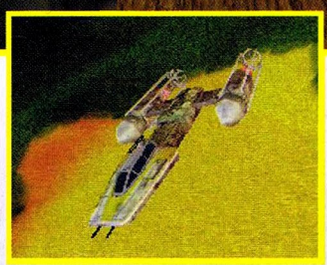
Taking an about bank and rocketing in a completely different direction from Force Commander is the N64 and PC title Rogue Squadron. Focusing on a critical phase in the power struggle between the Alliance and the Empire (slotted between Star Wars: A New Hope and The Empire Strikes Back) where Force is pure strategy, Rogue is all arcade action.

Rightly figuring that the airborne sections were what made N64 fans fork out for *Shadows of the Empire*, according to product manager Joel Dresky, "We took the best in gameplay from *Shadows of the Empire* and made it even better with special effects, realtime lighting, varied camera perspectives and more." You can now expect the engines in your Y-Wing to glow red hot, tracer fire to light up distant targets and downed AT-ATs to spew an unhealthy column of black smoke.

Perhaps trying to recoup some of Nintendo's Cliff Richard-niceness you only get to play as the rebels, commanding a squadron of X-Wings, Y-Wings, A-Wings and occasionally even snowspeeders and airspeeders against the Imperial foe. Your crew of 12 pilots, led by Luke Skywalker and Wedge Antilles will be asked to take on only the most dangerous missions, to fly reconnaissance sorties deep into enemy territory,

Rogue looks like a huge step forward visually from the earlier Nintendo 'Rebel' game Shadows of the Empire.

There's still a lot of work to be done on the game's special effects.



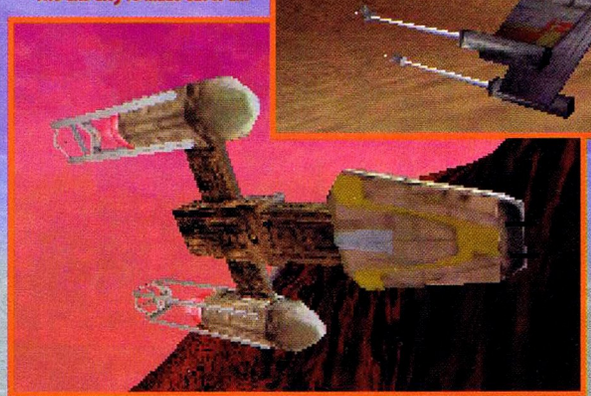
Take your Y-Wing into a steep dive and strafe the Imperial forces with your ion cannons.

X + Y = Fun

After an impressive run of PC titles the most famous spaceships ever have finally come home to fly on your N64. OK, so maybe you can't get behind the helm of an Imperial Star Destroyer or the Millennium Falcon but surely the family of X, Y and A–Wings have to be the next best thing. Featuring air-to-ground as well as air-to-air combat, Rogue Squadron *promises to be the most complete Star Wars arcade experience yet. We can't wait to climb into Luke Skywalker's flight suit as soon as possible, just as long as he gets it dry-cleaned first, the sweaty little tyke.*

X-Wing: Only two million light years on the clock and one careful owner. Free droid.

Y-Wing: Good at close range, this little beauty opens up AT-ATs like they're made out of tin!



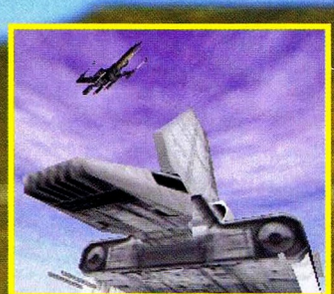
X-Wing, Y-Wing or A-Wing, the choice is yours. It's just a shame that you don't get to fly a TIE fighter.

escort shuttle craft to safety or search and destroy the Empire's power to strike back. In one mission you'll even be ordered to spring rebel prisoners from the high security Imperial prison on the spice planet Kessel.

Luckily you don't have to take on the Emperor's elite air forces all on your own as other members of the squadron will act as your wingmen, keep them alive on the early missions and they may be around to save your rebel ass later on. It's fortunate too that, depending on what craft you fly, you'll be tooled-up with the best rebel hardware; lasers, ion cannons, seeker missiles – you've seen it in the films, you get to fire it here. It really looks like LucasArts have learnt from the lukewarm reception accorded to their first 64-Bit Star Wars game and *Rogue Squadron*, even at this very early stage, looks impressive, most impressive.

The green hills of Corellia provide a beautiful backdrop for a spot of dog-fightery. Makes for a soft landing too.

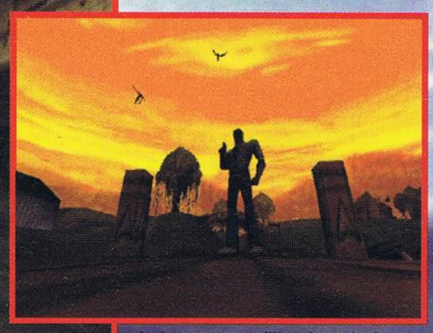
Repeat after me, cadet: TIE fighters BAD, X-Wings GOOD. Remember this and we'll have less friendly fire incidents.



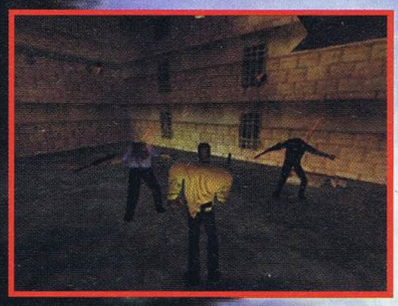
Time for a victory roll over your base – huzzah!

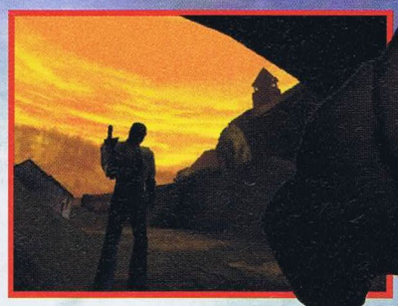
The hero of Shadow Man, *Mike LeRoi, can use both normal weapons and special voodoo magic items to blast the demonic hordes.*

It's not all zombies, you'll have to fight off Liveside adversaries too – and some of the serial killers you've been sent to assassinate have heavy-duty hardware.



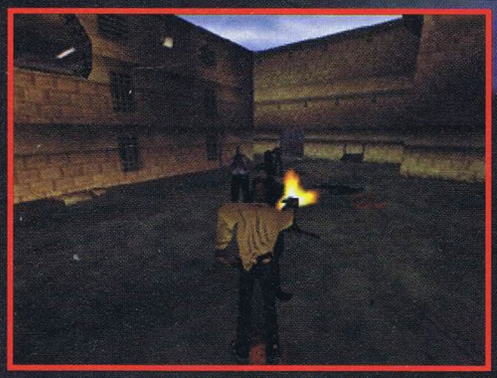
In the swamps you'll need your brain as well as you trigger finger to survive.





HOT FROM E3

SHADOW MAN



Despite its blasting pedigree there's a good deal of puzzling and RPG-like exploration to be done too.

Knee-deep in chicken blood and lucky charms GM was spell-bound by the scariest N64 game ever...

Much of Shadow Man*'s appeal is bound to reside in its haunting looks. You never know what's round the next corner.*

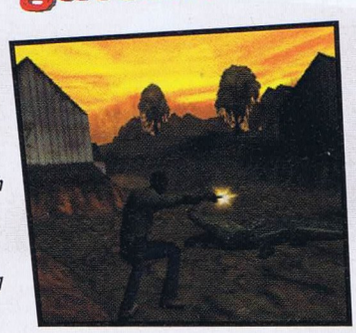
If Bowser was discovered floating face down in the moat outside Daisy's castle who'd suspect the plucky plumber? A year ago maybe nobody but with the likes of Doom and Quake splattering blood all over Nintendo's whiter than white image anything, it seems, is possible.

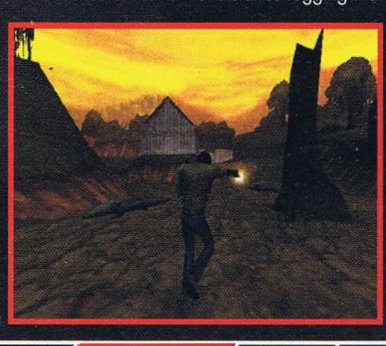
That's how *Shadow Man*, a game about voodoo, serial killers and zombies made it onto N64. Developed as a joint PC and N64 title by Iguana, the people who created *Turok*, and featuring two members of the original *Tomb Raider* team, *Shadow Man* is a third-person horror adventure with more guts than a freezer full of sausages.

So what's likely to make it stand out from the PC crowd or the N64's small gathering of 3D actioners? Well hopefully the absence of that awful distance fogging that has afflicted

See you 'gator...

Not all of the residents of Shadow Man*'s twisted world are evil, demonic serial killer types, some of them are evil, demonic reptile types, like this pack of hungry alligators. Obviously not particularly fussed about how fresh their meat is (Shadow Man has been dead for a while) these slavering jawed beasties close in and attempt to give you a right going over. Blast them with your voodoo magic, man!*

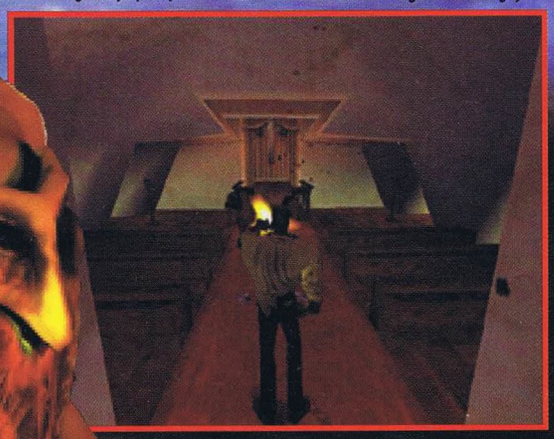




Out in the bayou these vicious crocs slither out to chew on your undead legs. No respect, some reptiles.

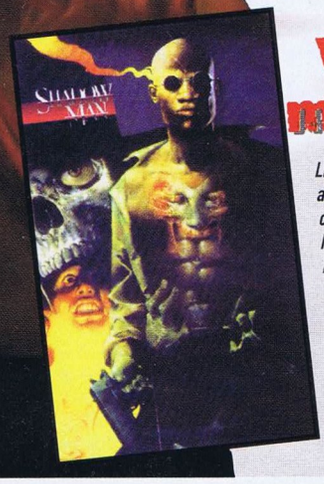
The game's designers have spent lots of time getting the interiors looking really spooky.

More chopper trouble, maybe time to use your Calabash bomb-thing on this bad guy.



Shadow Man: Serial killer hunter

The plot of Shadow Man, *inspired by the early issues of the comic book, is that Shadow's witch doctress mate, Mama Nettie, has a vision about the apocalypse to come. It is revealed to her that 'The Five', a coven of serial killers, plan to bring about the end of life as we know it by opening portals or 'Soul Gates' between the normal world of Liveside and the world of the dead known as Deadside. She sends Shadow Man on a quest to destroy The Five, save the world and bring her a nice box of Milk Tray. To do this though he must travel between the world of the dead and the living using his voodoo powers to overcome the evil in both zones. Is that all?*



Who is that masked man?

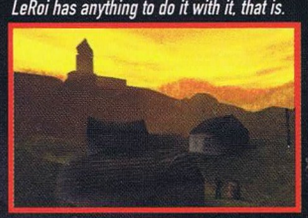
Like Turok: Dinosaur Hunter, Shadow Man is another games character straight out of a comic book. Shadow Man *is Mike LeRoi a New Orleans English graduate who also moonlights as a hit man. When he and his whole family are killed in a car accident, voodoo priestess Mama Nettie implants the mystical Mask of Shadows in his chest, this is what turns him into undead voodoo warrior Shadow Man, giving him amazing powers and a bad case of heartburn into the bargain. What fun!*

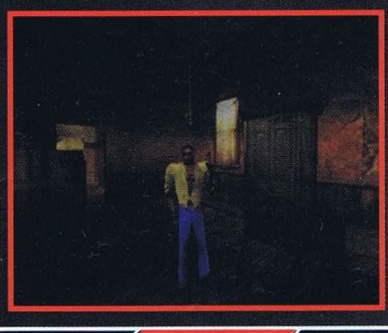
3D games on both formats, for one thing. *Shadow Man* promises to have the most impressive landscapes of any blaster yet – ranging from New York to the Everglades, the London Underground to voodoo temples. Switching from the real world to the spirit world, known as Deadside, you have to face both supernatural forces (zombies, monsters) and the all too human face of evil (a coven of serial killers). Naturally enough you can arm yourself with eight different weapons to take on the satanic hordes, most of them voodoo-based and some doubling-up as keys (as in the case of the otherwise bomb-like Calabash). The gameplay will switch between straight-up blasting and more platformy sections where you'll have to scale cliffs, climb ropes and leap obstacles.

Iguana's Guy Miller is bullish about comparisons with in-house rival *Turok 2*; "*Shadow Man* N64 is about as different from other Nintendo64 games as Hannibal Lecter is from Mickey Mouse." He's keen to point out the change in perspective (first-person to third) and the different environments that set his team's game apart. There are undeniable similarities between the two though, even if one revolves around modern and the other around prehistoric horror. The *Turok* team actually helped them develop techniques for modelling the game's gory characters. Originally all the characters in *Shadow Man* were going to be hand animated to mimic the original comic book but in the race against the clock this was

Exploring New York tenements is tricky when you know psychos are on the loose.

Sanctuary! No rest for the wicked, not if Mr LeRoi has anything to do it with it, that is.



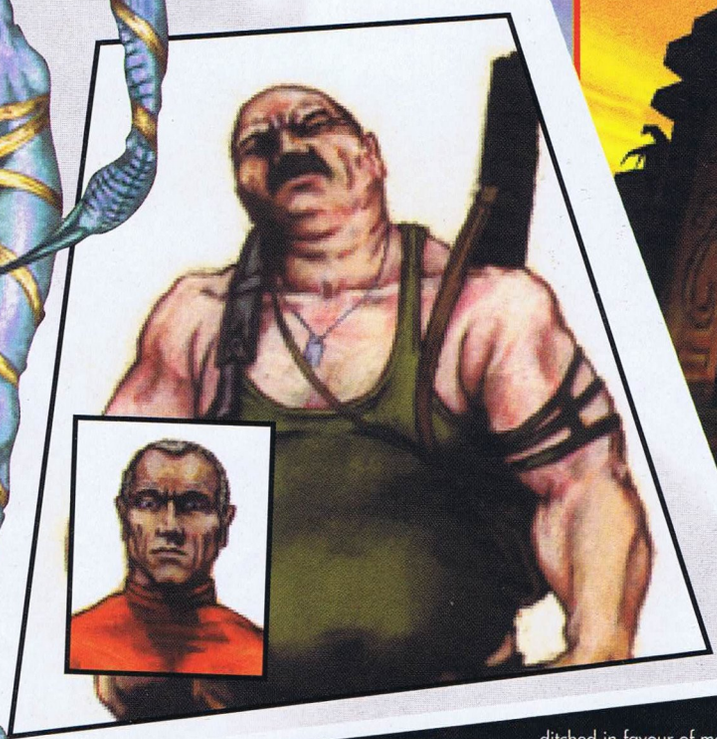


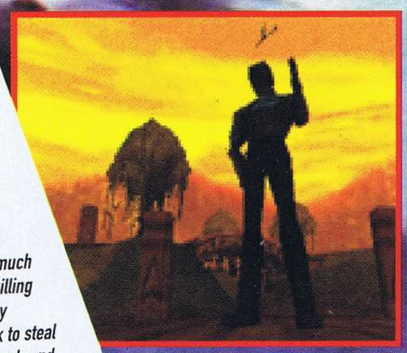
Iguana claim that on both N64 and PC Shadow Man *will lack the annoying fogging that obscures everything drawn in the distance.*

Calling all psychos

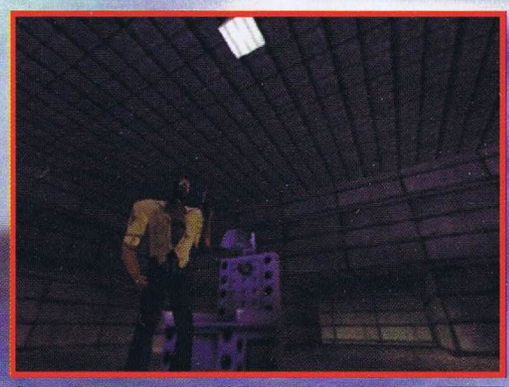
The unusual thing about Shadow Man *is its combination of human and supernatural adversaries. Sure, the blokes may look like your average gun-toting yank but they're much more evil than that, intent as they are on killing people in a ritualistic fashion and thereby bringing the spirits of the damned back to steal all your milk and tread crisps into your brand new carpet. The* Shadow Man *team did a lot of research into the serial killer phenomenon to make sure they were fairly represented as the babbling, mad-eyed psychopaths they really are.*

Not very practical party wear but expect to see Liz Hurley or Emma Noble in it soon...

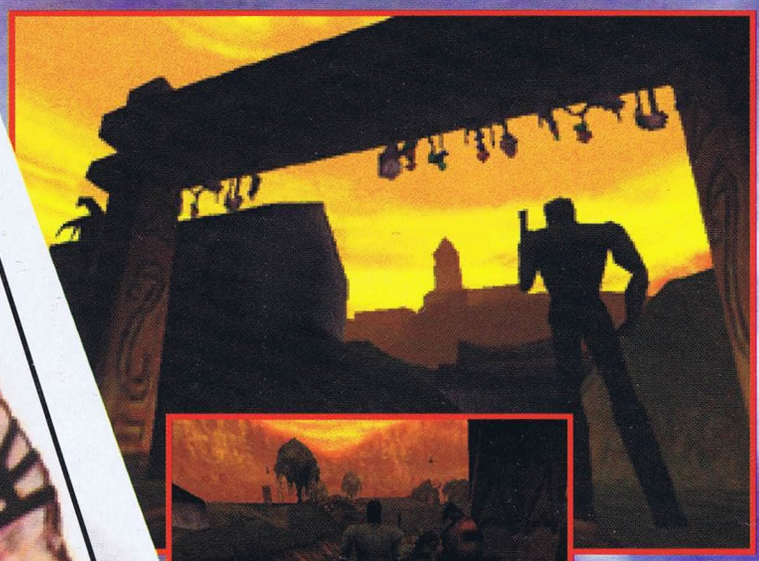




All the Deadside environments have a particularly eerie look to them.



Damn, where's that light switch? I'll just sit in this nice chair... FFZZZZZTT!

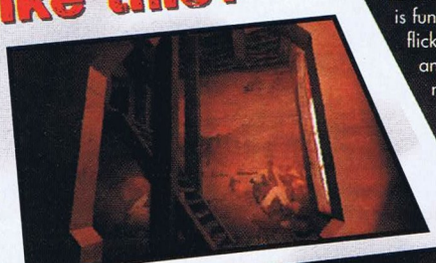


Them's voodoo charms boy, don't go touching them, young 'un.

Midnight in the garden of evil, yesterday.

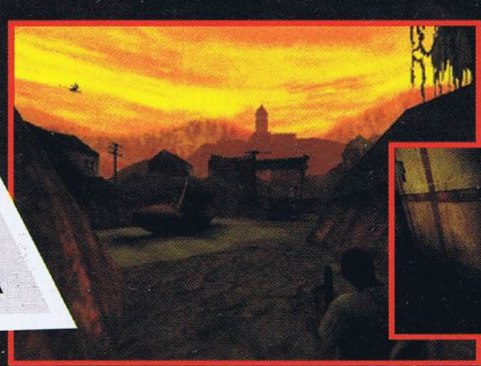
Who'd live in a house like this?

Well, serial killers, natch. Tons of time has been spent on giving the inside locations (grotty tenements like those shown here) the necessary creepy feeling. The team have really gone all-out for atmosphere to make the serial killer hunting urban sections as tense as possible.



ditched in favour of motion capture – from what we've seen a wise choice as the 30 frames per second animation is looking smoother than a greased-up Des Lynham.

It's clear that *Shadow Man* is attempting to avoid all the possible pitfalls of 3D, Guy Miller even has some words of criticism for the lovely Lara, "*Tomb Raider* is fundamentally linear, fundamentally a flick-a-switch shooter, fundamentally annoying in that each jump you make must be pixel perfect." In *Shadow Man* the location will dictate the balance between puzzling and blasting, so that the Gardelle County Penitentiary level will be room-based up close and personal blastage while the Deadside Wastelands open out into an assault course forcing you to jump, swing and climb. We can also expect sections of the game that let you complete levels in any order you like, rather than forcing you to play through a sequence (always a bonus if you get the equivalent of *Tomb Raider 2*'s trixy Floating Islands). But if it's keen to avoid the problems of the past *Shadow Man* is also dead set on stealing ideas from the best. Fans of *GoldenEye* will be chuffed to hear that two-handed gun-totery is taken to its logical extreme in *Shadow Man*, as you run around with a gun in each hand, or a gun and a voodoo weapon or holding a torch – or indeed clinging onto a rope or otherwise hanging suspended in mid-air. *Tomb Raider* has obviously influenced the platform sections but *Mario 64* and *Zelda* have also provided some gameplay inspiration as *Shadow Man* incorporates RPG elements as you track down and attempt to decipher artifacts like The Texte. ("There's a mystery at the heart of the game, the answer to which will blow your mind," interjects Miller).



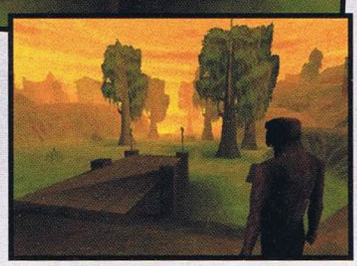
You play some levels in any order you like, a good idea that helps avoid frustrating bits.

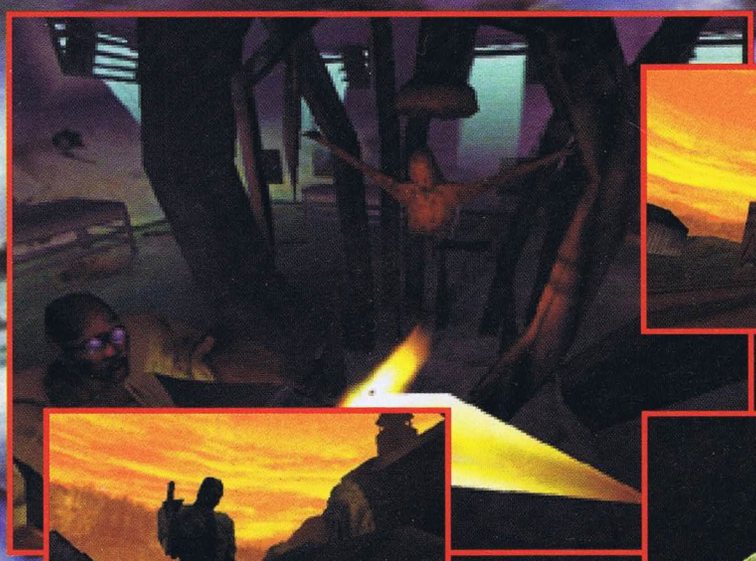
You get eight different weapons to use in your murderer hunt.

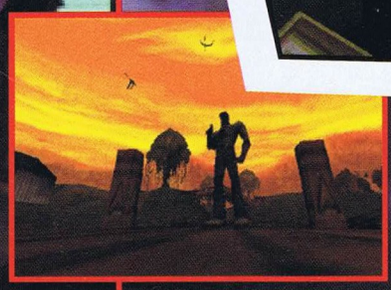
There are over 20 artifacts to collect in the game, some offering you vital clues.

Meanwhile... in the swamp

Much of the action takes place in the Louisiana bayou, a hotch-potch of swampy marshland and scattered settlements. Because of the different terrain you'll need to use all your platform prowess to get about, dodging the marshiest bits and leaping from jetty to jetty.







Luckily you do get a torch to carry in many of the darker locations.

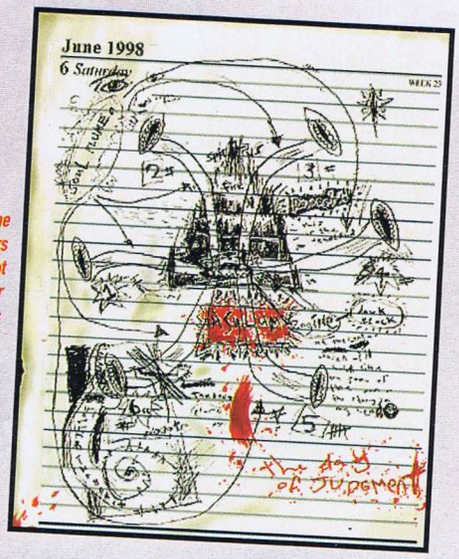
Mike has a degree in English Literature. Don't argue.

Mike opens up with one of the more powerful voodoo firearms. Some can be used as keys as well. Could be handy.

Pretend to be an undead Dirty Harry.

"Your wife's pretty little head"

To prepare for creating the gruesome look of the game the Iguana art team watched recent horror films like Seven, spaced-out classics like Blade Runner, Dune and Apocalypse Now, read horror books by Joseph Campbell and even gazed upon paintings by Bosch and Breugel. That must have been some evening.



The designers watched a lot of horror movies including top psycho story Seven.

Below: Deadside's Cathedral of Pain. What a lovely place to visit. Cheap too.

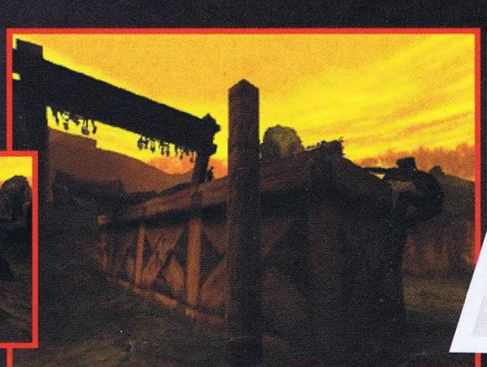
Peeking at *Shadow Man*'s spooky locations it's no surprise that its visual style has been touched by classic horror images both ancient and modern. Guy Miller revealed, "We've marvelled at the paintings of Hieronymous Bosch and Breugel (in particular his painting of the Tower of Babel, which we used as a model for the gigantic cathedral of Pain in the heart of Deadside)."

More recent horror events like Seven, TV show Millennium and Jacob's Ladder have also been on the home viewing list for the game's designers as have some more academic studies of the most evil serial killers. "We've culled so much from a huge variety of influences," said Miller, "And we think that this is reflected in the richness and complexity of the game". Bold words indeed but by the look of these early shots they've certainly injected enough gruesome, skin-crawling nastiness to put the wind up even the staunchest horror hero. Just as well then that the central character of the game had his nerves removed before he became voodoo assassin *Shadow Man*.

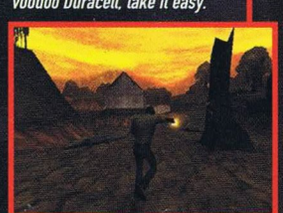
Because Iguana's star turn is designed as a one-player rather than a multi-player game on both N64 and PC a lot depends on how well players relate to the game's hero. Lacking the obvious outstanding attributes of Ms Croft, *Shadow Man* has certain unique characteristics. Guy Miller certainly seems to think he's got potential, "What really appealed to us were the possibilities for gameplay, the fact that *Shadow Man* is really two people existing in two separate worlds... We liked the idea that he was dead, that you could play a dead guy."

Well it makes a change from plumbers and secret agents, that's for sure. We'll be keeping you up to date with its progress.

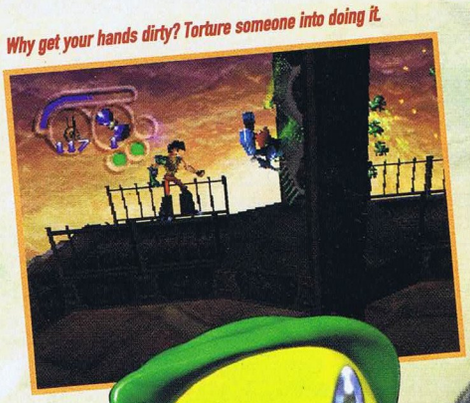
Someone could be hiding the back of that shack, Jack.

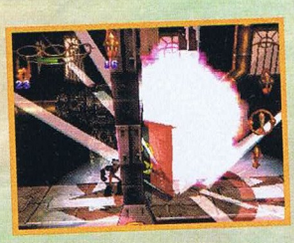


You're obviously running out of voodoo Duracell, take it easy.

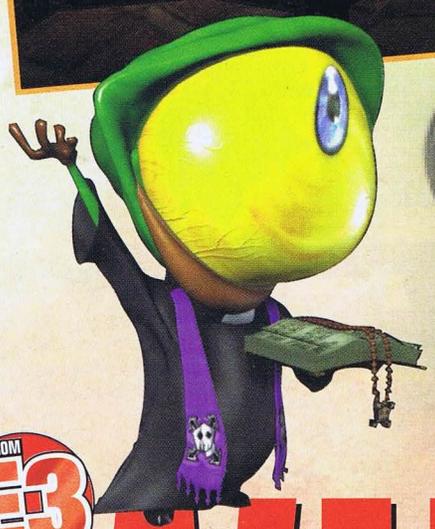


Why get your hands dirty? Torture someone into doing it.





Shiny certainly haven't scrimped on the explosions.



HOT FROM E3

WILD 9

If you thought super hero worms or the world's smallest nuclear weapon were weird, you should see what Shiny are doing now...

No one is safe from Wex, even if they're in the air.

Flames? No problem when you shove someone on top of 'em.

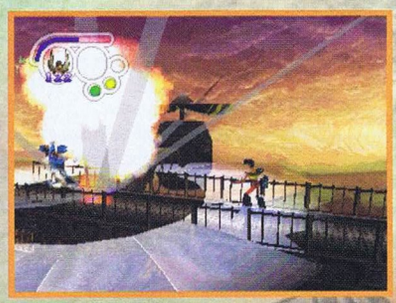
There aren't many companies that can announce they're working on a new platform game and get people to sit up and take notice. But when Shiny, creators of Earthworm Jim and MDK, say that's what they're up to – you just know that you're going to get something a bit special, and a bit weird.

And you're not going to be disappointed by *Wild 9*. The company that introduced worms wearing spacesuits and catapulting cows with fridges is packing this one to the gills with outrageous features and gameplay that'll make you smile – and then make you squirm as Shiny get nasty.

You play Wex, a spotty teenager who, together with eight alien teenagers, must rid the universe of Karn – the self-aware form made up from all the evil and anger that mankind banished into outer space. That'll teach 'em. At first look you may think this bears some similarity to *Pandemonium* and its peers – you remember, those supposedly 3D but actually 2D platformers that are available on the PlayStation during the last two Christmases. Well it is and it isn't. It's not attempting to pull off anything like *Super*

Classic moment

He's in the way. How will we get by? Oh, there's a big grinder in the way. I know. I'll blast him into it and clog the whole thing up. It'll hurt, but it'll only hurt him so it's OK.

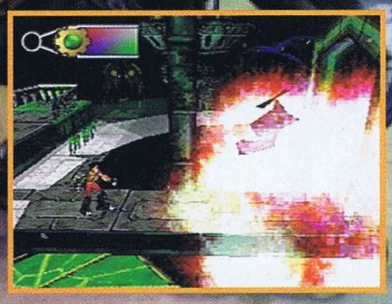


Mental lighting effects? Yup – got loads of those.

More 3D than Pandemonium and Crash.

Zap 'em, then let the fun, er, torture, begin.

Wex'll never make a hero with a mental hairdo like that.



Airborne targets make some of the jumps tricky.

Meet 'em, greet 'em, torture and beat 'em

Thanks to your glove and rig weapon you can do so much more than just kill people by shooting them. If your imagination is starting to run wild, take a look at some of these methods of torturing that have all been banned under the Geneva Convention – but seem strangely satisfying in Wild 9 *...*

Zap him with your glove and swing him over your head, repeatedly smashing him into the floor to do 'im. Jolly good!

Don't want to risk jumping over the hole? Simply stuff someone's body down it. There, much safer. Splendid!

Grab someone and put the body into the flames. It kills them off quickly and makes your passage easier. Toasted!

There's nothing that will take the edge off a spike more than the body of your enemy. Well, that's certainly not cricket!

You could always lift up a big box and smash it down on some poor chap's head. Would you? I say that's awfully good!

Can't swim? Don't worry, neither can they. Just drop them in and when the body floats, use it as a stepping stone.

3D or not 3D, that is the question

Yes and no. It is and it isn't. That is the answer. Not much of one really but we'll explain. It's not like Mario *where you have complete freedom to roam anywhere in a 3D landscape. But as you can see from these shots, there are various routes along your journey and you'll have venture into and out of the screen as well as just side to side. You'll also have to go up and down a lot. Simple really!*

Mario 64 it isn't – but you can still go in and out of the screen.

In an effort to make it less linear you can decide which way to go.

Mario 64's majesty, but is instead going for non-linear 2D levels, but with 3D graphics.

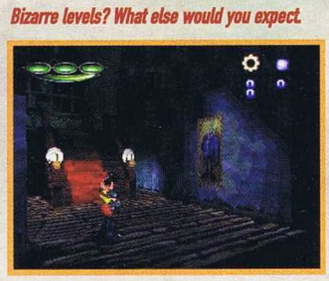
To get away from the pseudo-three dimensional *Pandemonium* games, Shiny have made all the levels very different and have tried to incorporate as many different types of gameplay as possible. One minute you'll be playing a traditional platform-style game whereas the next you'll be whizzing through a marsh on speeder bikes trying to nail some villainous shocktrooper.

There are nine levels in all, and each one will introduce something new to the game. Like the level that sees you riding a train full of weapons that's on its way to the boss's Karn's palace. You have to disassemble the train car by car before it reaches its target. Or maybe you'd prefer being chased by Tank, a metal freak with sonar instead of eyes. Whatever your taste, Shiny reckon there's something for you in this platforming goulash.

You only get two weapons in the game. Disappointed? Well, one of them does happen to be, and we quote, "The galaxy's most powerful weapon," so expect a pyrotechnic display unlike any other when you start

You really don't want to know what we did to this poor alien.

Bizarre levels? What else would you expect.



Meet the Wild 9

1 B'ANGUS

The B in his name is silent. Relies on his charm and cuteness to get him out of sticky situations. The only character in the game who has to deal with the dreaded Black Sheep. Lives inside Wex's rig.

2 WEX

The group's human leader. Is rumoured to fancy Boomer McTwist. His aim is to defeat Karn and get back home to Earth. Wears the most powerful weapon in the galaxy on his arm.

3 BOOMER McTWIST

Wex's cheerleader and biggest fan. Hesitant to act unless she's following the Wexster. Her dad is Spartan. Uses the tartan around her waist as a weapon.

4 MAC SHEEN

He's a robot with a human face stretched over his head. Was created by Karn but has sided with the Wild 9. Desperately wants to become human but ends up turning into weird inventions. Neat!

5 FILBERT

A nine-feet tall frog with a massive battery strapped to his back. Died but was reanimated in a school science experiment that went wrong. Needs electricity to live. His tongue can reach up to ten feet.

6 DARWIN

Started out life as a bird but landed in a toxic swamp and developed a bump on his arse that later became Filbert. Developed a fodder gun which is a normal gun loaded with tadpoles. 'Nuff said.

7 SPARTAN

Scottish superhero freak. He's a combination of Scottish warrior and drill instructor from Hell. Oh, and he's dead as well. He now appears on a little cloud to give advice when called on.

8 CRYSTAL

Spock with bumps. She tends to drive the rest of her team crazy with her looks and charm. Her hair is alive and acts as a guardian to her – like a rottweiler or a pit bull.

9 NITRO THE LIVING BOMB

If he so much as sees, hears or gets touched by anything he doesn't like, he explodes. Anything within a 300 yard radius gets fragged – then the team have seconds to put his suit back together to keep him alive.

The art guys are working overtime on the monsters.

If you can't see trouble, it'll find you real soon.

You should see some of the sub-levels – very weird.

Time to turn him into scrap.

The glove and rig are the most powerful weapon in the galaxy.

to raise hell as Wex. Your rig and glove (your main weapon) does have several different uses though. You could shoot someone with it but wouldn't it be more fun to raise them into the air and torture them for a while before you finally off 'em? Of course it would. And imagine the mess it makes when it's fully powered-up. Ugh! Your arsenal is rounded off with the addition of a telescopic staff that you can use as a weapon or a pole vault-like device.

Other weird things we've seen so far in the game include a carnival from hell where you get to deal with unfinished roller coasters, human-shooting galleries and death-dealing bumper cars. Mind you, that wasn't quite as weird as the 500lb frog named Filbert who carries a 150lb mace. These boys at Shiny have too many late nights.

After being commended for producing cartoon-like animation on the Mega Drive and SNES with *Earthworm Jim*, Shiny have really gone to town now that they have the extra

And the bad guys

10 THE BLACK SHEEP

Is out to get B'Angus and carries a huge arsenal of weapons to do the job with. He never speaks and dresses only in black (a bit like Les then). Drools a lot and has mad eyes.

11 TANK

A killing machine that uses sonar to hunt you down. He can even detect heartbeats and when he's on your case he'll take a straight line to you, tearing up walls and floors to find you.

12 RAMZIG

Was once best mates with Sampson (a good guy you meet later in the game) but is now a nasty old bounty hunter. He has a creature on his back who constantly hurts him, which is why he isn't in a good mood.

13 HAPPY

Has a pet flea called Ackbar. Is not as [illegible] as he's made a deal with Karn to get his mother out of prison. Only has an IQ of [illegible] so he tends to get easily confused. Very happy but very dumb.

14 KARN

The meglomaniac. The biggest bad guy in the known universe. He's 9768 years old and looks like a chunk of rotten flesh that hangs from the ceiling. You'll have to go some to beat this guy and return home.

That'll be the remains of some poor sap then?

power of the PlayStation to widen their horizons. *Earthworm Jim* used 3000 frames of animation (not too shoddy) – Wex uses 60,000. So you can imagine how smooth he's going to look. In true Shiny style the characters are all instantly loveable. The cute stuff will appeal to kids while the dark and nasty side to the game will make it a hit with older gamers.

What most people would call hell, Wex calls home.

Shiny have a reputation for being able to pull off gameplay feats that others struggle to match. The *EWJ* games were great platformers while *MDK* was a great shoot-em-up. *Wild 9* sort of combines the two in a 3D world where you get to interact with most of the scenery in one way or another. While the wait for *Messiah* continues, *Wild 9* has been resurrected by the codeheads at Shiny and changed from the playable but actionless platformer we saw last year to what looks and plays like one of the most original and fun-filled games we've seen in a long time. So come on Shiny, give us a finished version.

After the success of the EWJ cartoons, expect Wild 9 to hit the small screen soon.

THREE AMIGOS

N64 *Serious competition to* Mario Kart 64. *This may look better but will it have the oomph where it counts, with gameplay?*

PC *Cor, it's all 3Dfx'd up. Textures? This has the lot. And it's as slick as a greaser's quiff, but more fun to play with we bet.*

PSX *Analogue control, rumble compatible and some dead flash graphics.* Gran Turismo *it ain't but it's still top fun.*

HOT FROM E3

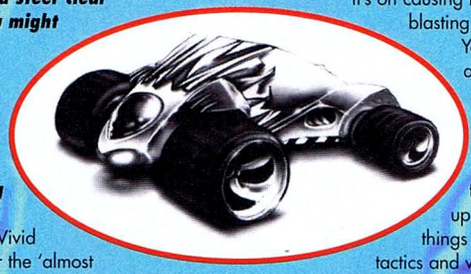
The rhino-based car.

S.C.A.R.S.

Look out Mario Kart old boy, a new contender to your crown is on its way...

Power sliding around the corners is essential for overtaking, but it's a tricky old game on the ice.

Given that Gran Turismo has roared its way to race-em-up domination you might think that other publishers would steer clear of the genre for a while. You might think they'd have the good sense to wait until all the fuss has died down. But no, developers Vivid Image are flashing Oasis-style V signs at everyone out of the window of their latest racing baby – SCARS.



When you remember that Vivid Image were also responsible for the 'almost as good as *Mario Kart Street Racer* on Mega Drive, SNES, Saturn and PlayStation, you won't be surprised to see that this is a fantasy cars with weapons-type racer where the emphasis is not just on the winning, or even the taking part – it's on causing mayhem and carnage while blasting your way to the front.

You get to choose from nine vehicles, all based on some of nature's ruthless killers (lions, rhinos, tigers etc) which all have different attributes (speed, acceleration and grip). Then it's on to the nine tracks where you can win, or end up getting totally toasted – the only things that can stop the latter are cunning tactics and weapons. There are alternative routes on all the courses, but you have to decide whether you take the short-cut with all the dangers that are packed into it

Weapons. That'll liven things up a bit. No one will overtake you and live now.

Second place may be enough to make you happy but first is where the action is.

A few well-placed missiles will soon have those front-runners losing out.

Flash lighting effects could herald the arrival of an unwanted missile.

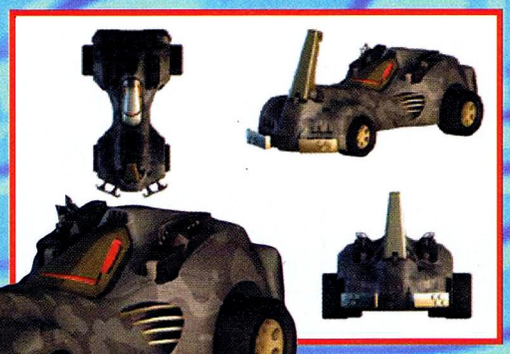
Various viewpoints suit people better. We prefer to race from inside the cockpit.

PASS THE PARCEL

One of the more effective ways of getting rid of that troublesome opponent is to fire up a timebomb. It sits on top of your car counting down. Just before it reaches zero hit fire and you will transfer it to the closest vehicle (assuming there is one in range). If you time it right he'll have no time to throw it back at you, or anyone else. It's sneaky, it'll lose you friends, but hey, it works – and if you yell, "See ya!" just as you do it's ten times as annoying.

(Top) A little off-roading will cut the corners. (Left) It's Independence Day all over again.

Cause a traffic jam with your weapons.



How the rhino car looked when it was on the designer's drawing board.

Spectacular crashes and mad-as-a-kipper weapons. Is this fun or what?

Most of the courses have short-cuts and alternative routes in them.

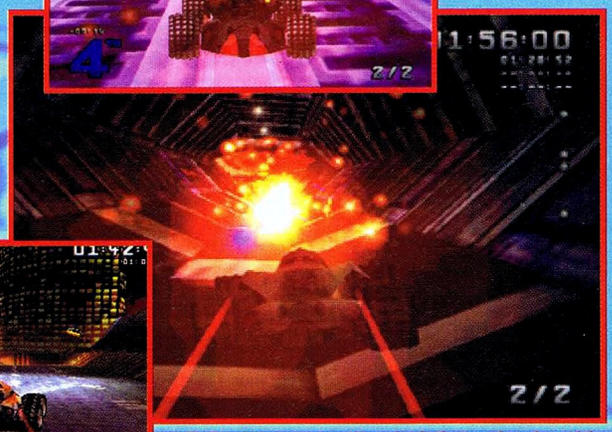
You'll need some serious fire-power to catch up with the leader. Watch your back.

or stay on the main course where there are more likely to be beefier power-ups.

The PlayStation and N64 versions allow four players to go head-to-head. If you have access to a beefy PC and the wallet to handle the inevitable whopper of a phone bill, you can network up to eight players.

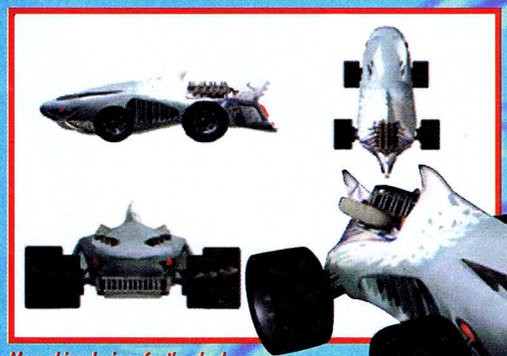
So if you imagine *Mario-Kart*-style nasty racing action combined with some impressive looking 3D graphics you won't be too far from getting how this operates. It's very fast, even in multi-player modes and the racing side is not that realistic. So you can concentrate on the fun of power sliding and weapons more than your approach to corners. Whether it'll manage to come close to the holy grail of cartoon racers such as *Mario Kart*, is yet to be seen, but with *Street Racer* under their sleeves – if anyone is going to come close, it'll be Vivid Image with *SCARS*.

(Left) The road may be narrow but it means you are in an ideal position to fire off some weapons at him in front of you.

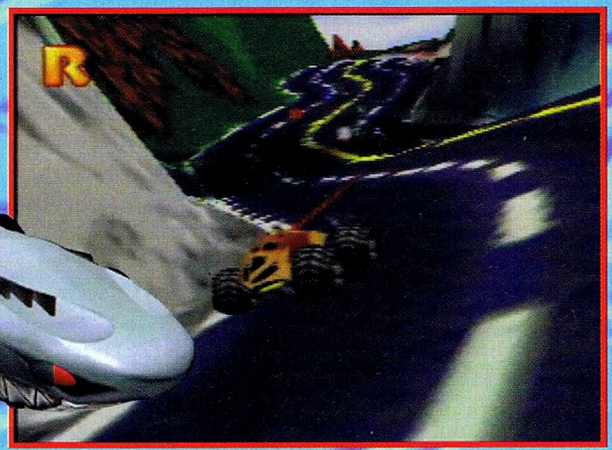


Graphics Mario Kart could only dream of. But will it be more fun to play?

'No Entry' signs are great for using in the tunnel sections of the later courses. No one will get by them.



More shiny designs for the shark vehicle. All the cars are based on dangerous animals that have a bad reputation because they've killed a few people.



POWER ME UP

BOOMARANG
Fire it off and watch as it hits everything in its path, knocking it sideways and generally causing much Crocodile Dundee hilarity.

BULLET
Er, well you fire them at people and when they hit the target, the target stops dead. And then you drive by. Easy really.

MAGNET
Power this sucker up and anyone in front of you will find themselves in reverse gear as they get pulled in the opposite direction.

HEAT SEEKER
Locks on to the nearest heat source (usually your opponent's engine) and won't stop until it cools that source down the hard way.

SHIELD
Ha ha, no one can kill me when I've got this baby fired up like a good 'un. Problem is, though that it doesn't last for very long.

STINGER
As the name suggests, this weapon is a real pain in the exhaust pipe for anyone unlucky enough to caught by it.

STOPPER
Fire this and a fence appears in front of an opponent. He can either try to go around or more likely plough straight into it.

TIMEBOMB
Counts down from 30 seconds. Pass it on to someone else before it reaches zero or you'll be a scrap heap before you know it.

TURBO
Take a guess. It makes you go faster with a short burst of the good stuff. Watch those tight corners and walls though.

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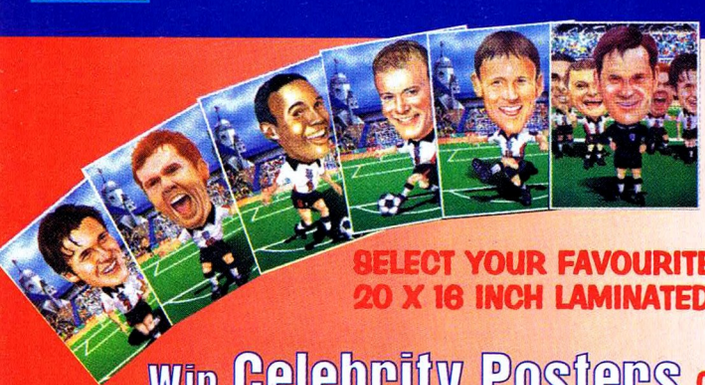

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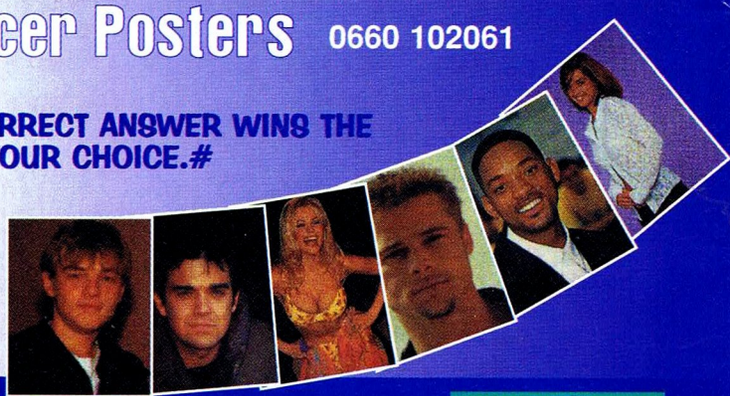

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Calls cost up to £3, so ask permission from the person paying the phone bill.

We reserve the right to substitute a poster with another, or to discontinue the competition in the event of stocks being depleted. Unless otherwise indicated, competitions close on 31.8.98 after which they may be replaced by a similar service on the same number. Competitions involve multiple choice questions with tiebreaker except where 'Instant Win' is shown. Soccer Five-0 has 10 questions worth 1-10 points each and winners must beat a target score. Instant Win competitions have multiple choice questions plus a game to decide if you are an instant winner. Most competitions require a tone phone. For rules or winners' names, send SAE. Prize claims 'Claims Dept':
InfoMedia PO Box 28 Northampton NN1 5DS. Helpline 01604 732028. Winners Line: 0839 404000.

Reviews

THE MOST OPINIONATED PLAYTESTERS AROUND!

Robin Alway

Whatcha up to?
Watching the World Cup, finishing *Banjo-Kazooie*, planning a trip to Glastonbury, dreaming about *Zelda* and trying to convince the team that *Commandos* is just like *Great Escape* on me old Spectrum.

I bin mosely playin'...
Banjo-Kazooie, Spice World, Colin McRae Rally, X-Files

Marcus Hawkins

Whatcha up to?
Sneaky top secret stuff that you'll find out about in a couple of months, dreaming about *Metal Gear Solid*, making tea when no one else is around and recovering from all the hard work I did at E3 in America.

I bin mosely playin'...
Banjo-Kazooie, Colin McRae Rally, X-Files, Spice World

Les Ellis

Whatcha up to?
Playing *Commandos* loads, trying to find out how Marcus rigged the office World Cup sweepstake so he got Brazil, getting my hands on Scully in *X-Files* and annoying the neighbours with loud music.

I bin mosely playin'...
Commandos, X-Files, Banjo-Kazooie, Heart of Darkness

Scoring in the GM goal this month...

Andy Smith
Videogames Journalist

What he's playing at...
Road Rash 3D gave Whiffy the chance to dust off his biker jacket while he got all rusty on *Armoured Core*.

Pete Wilton
Videogames Journalist

What he's playing at...
Well the lad was looking a bit wan so we gave him *Commandos* and he cheered right up. So we gave him *Viper*...

Iain White
Prod Editor PlayStation Power

What he's playing at...
From flash Batmobile to naff Ford Capri as Iain tackled *Batman & Robin* and *Tommi Makinen Rally* on the PlayStation.

Dean Mortlock
Associate Editor PlayStation Power

What he's playing at...
With his special weirdy beardy head on Dean ran away with *Breath of Fire 3* and we didn't see him for ages after that.

Wil Overton
RPG Bloke N64 Magazine

What he's playing at...
RPG overfiend and defender of all things gamey and Japanese, the boy Overton couldn't resist the charms of *FF7* on PC.

Steve Jarrett
Videogames Journalist

What he's playing at...
Returning to his Spectrum routes, gaming veteran Stevie J locked up with an old friend in *Sentinel Returns*, this time on PSX.

Dan Griffiths
Deputy Editor PlayStation Magazine

What he's playing at...
Dan got to grips with a bit of girl power as he gives the Spice Girls a thorough dressing down in *Spice World*.

Matt Pierce
Games Editor PC Gamer

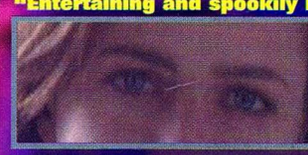
What he's playing at...
A misspent youth on the streets of Brum gave Fat Matt all the experience he needed for *Wreckin' Crew*.

ALL THIS MONTH'S NEW RELEASES GET THE GAMESMASTER PLAYTEST...

COMMANDOS
"One of the best strategy games ever."

COLIN MCRAE RALLY
"Yearning for edge of the seat driving?"

X-FILES
"Entertaining and spookily bizarre."



KOBE BRYANT IN NBA COURTSIDE
"Just about the best N64 game of basketball."

FINAL FANTASY 7
"FF7 should take the PC by storm."

HEART OF DARKNESS	PSX	70
ROAD RASH 3D	PSX	72
ARMOURED CORE	PSX	74
BREATH OF FIRE 3	PSX	76
SENTINEL RETURNS	PSX	78
TOMMI MAKINEN RALLEY	PSX	79
MECH COMMANDER	PC	80
BATMAN AND ROBIN	PSX	82
SPICE WORLD	PSX	84
VIPERS	PSX	86
RIVEN	SAT	88
WRECKIN' CREW	PSX	89
WARGAMES	PSX	90
CRIME KILLER	PSX	91

E3 REPORT

We flew out to Atlanta to hang out with nekkid laydees and drink champagne, and... that is, we er, travelled to Atlanta to track down the best games on the planet. Yes, that's it.

OUR REVIEWING GUARANTEE...
1. We play every single game to within an inch of its life.
2. We use the most experienced reviewers in the business.
3. Average games get average marks, ie. 50-60%.
4. We're not swayed by swish graphics – only gameplay.
5. We never, ever review demos.

E3 GOLD

"Visually it's one of the best things we've seen on any console"

BANJO-KAZOOIE

ALL AROUND

PC

PlayStation

MD

VERSION TESTED

DO YOU KNOW

Our Robin went to visit the folks from Rare at their Twycross HQ and played the game to death. He still can't get enough of it.

I'll get you my pretty!

Gruntilda, she of the green complexion and pointy fingers, wants to make herself beautiful. So, she kidnaps Banjo's sister Tooty and, tries to toy with the forces of nature by swapping their looks. Enter big brother Banjo and feathery best mate Kazooie to the rescue. As if you needed an excuse for leaping and pecking your way through the game's nine worlds to rescue Tooty. Lose all your lives and this grizzly scene is played out in, what must be, one of the N64's finest ever cut sequences. Stop it happening or feel the guilt!

You've failed in your quest so prepare to see your sister meet her fate in this 'Transmogrifier'™.

Gruntilda goes in one and your sister in the other to allow the 'Looks Exchange' to take place.

Gruntilda's young assistant ape (not related to our Grip Chimp) works the controls.

Don't fancy yours much! Hang on that's Banjo's sis! Oh, that no good (yet suddenly attractive) witch!

Mmm... Something's happening and it looks really green... Don't like the look of this at all!

Swit-swoo... Cor, look at her now... Woof!

It could be the greatest platformer of the year, but is it better than Mario 64?

Is it then? Eh? Or not? Rather than the inevitable Mario 64 question, by rights, a review of Banjo-Kazooie should start with a fanfare, hats being thrown in the air and shouts of, "It be here! It be here!" Followed by an expectant silence that's broken only by gasps and, erm, lots of hats falling back down again.

It is, after all, Rare's first release since *Diddy Kong*. A game that's had some of the world's most talented coders eating take away Pizza for over two years to bring you. A game that *Mario* god head Shigeru Miyamto reckons is, well, whatever passes for dead good in Japanese. So it feels a bit uncharitable to instead cut straight to the question that's been bouncing around everyone's minds like a pup with a bog roll since the game was first announced – is *Banjo-Kazooie* better than *Mario 64*? Don't hang around, is it or isn't it? Unfortunately, the answer's going to need some serious explaining...

It's time to learn...

Platform games have always been about learning a range of moves and putting them into practice as you go through the levels. Where Banjo-Kazooie *deviates from the norm is that you're not given a full set of moves from the start but have to 'collect them' as you progress. Most levels have two or three new skills. To add them to your abilities you first have to find a molehill....*

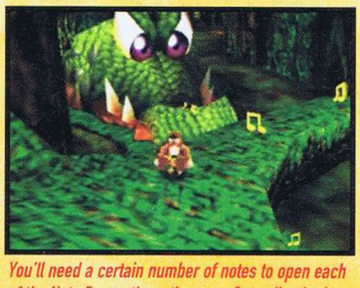
Bottles the mole is a good friend of Tooty's, although he's never been that fond of the company Banjo keeps.

The bigger the better!

Big? Large? Massive? We'd probably go for 'whacking great huge' as a way of describing the size of Banjo-Kazooie. *Or even 'ginormous' which we usually reserve for things of Godzilla-like proportions. Daisy's castle in* Mario 64 *is made to look a bit on the pokey side compared to Gruntilda's lair in* Banjo. *This central area works in the same level selecting way as Mazzer's castle but must be a good, oooh, eight times bigger and has some devilishly difficult-to-find entrances. So much so that anyone looking over the shoulder of someone exploring the Lair could be forgiven for thinking it was a world in itself. Here's how the whole exploring, jigsaw-completing, door-opening way of selecting a level works...*

The ole' hub effect is used to bewilder, baffle and confuse the enemy which, my friends is Banjo and pal Kazooie.

Explore to find Jigsaws, Note Doors, Warp Cauldrons and Spell Books that help you get to the next lair.



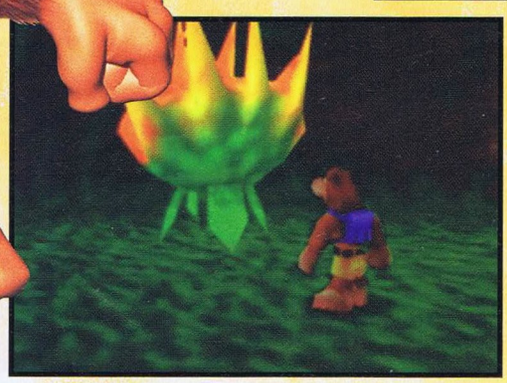
You'll need a certain number of notes to open each of the Note Doors, there they are. Get collecting!

Here Kazooie starts to take the strain using the old Talon Trot *(see page 41)*

First things first. *Banjo* is a staggering technical achievement. Flick your N64's red light on, experience an even more agonising than usual five seconds of black screen and from the moment the bear taps on the inside of your TV and the superb intro sequence kicks into life, you can't fail to be impressed. Actually start playing and you'll begin drafting a letter to your grandchildren about the golden age of graphics.

Visually, it's one of the best things we've seen on any console. The characters are as crisp as toast and vividly hi-res but it's the levels themselves that must be giving even Nintendo a fear of failure. They're simply astounding to look at, particularly if you climb or fly your way to a high-up point and use Banjo's eye-view to scan across the horizon. It's the best way to get a sense of the scale of each of the nine worlds and also realise that there's not a wisp of fog spoiling the view. You can see for miles, with only the occasional object fading into vision stopping this just fractionally short of perfection.

But *Banjo*'s not just a silicon stretching display of raw programming power.



Sisters are doin' it...

With classic panto timing, Gruntilda has a good sister called Brentilda. You'll bump into her as you make your way round the lair. Talk to her and she'll give you information about her sister which turns out to absolutely vital when you come to the game's quiz show showdown at the end.

Even Brentilda's Fairy-Godmother powers aren't enough to help Banjo and his mate Kazooie stop the evil Gruntilda. But she'll offer all the help she can... listen carefully.

Get moving!

Bottles the mole pops up right throughout the game to dispense new skills to the grateful bird/bear partnership. And he knows his stuff. Here's what you'll be learning, from a simple swimming stroke to the dead tricky, mid-air beak-missile attack. Cheers, goggle eyes.

Swimming

Normal controls on the surface. Underwater press A : Banjo kicks press B : Kazooie flaps.

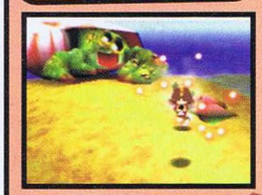
Climbing

Banjo can climb trees, poles and pipes. Just use A to release your grip.

Feathery Flap

Not strictly flying, Kazooie can use his wings to extend Banjo's leaps. It can also be used to control descent speed.

Forward Roll



This is a powerful attack. Simply pick up speed and then use B to launch your attack.

Rat-a-tat Rap

This causes Banjo to jump and Kazooie to attack using a flurry of sharp pecks. Simply press A to jump and B to peck.

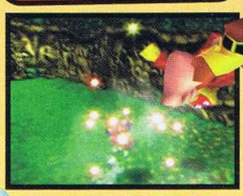
Flap Flip

Kazooie uses his wings to help him jump higher. Crouch using Z then press A to jump as high as you can.

Talon Trot

Kazooie can carry Banjo by holding Z then pressing left C. Kazooie can move faster and climb steeper slopes as well.

Beak Barge



Combines Banjo's shoulder barge with Kazooie's lunge. Hold Z then press B to barge. Good for smashing stuff.

Beak Buster

Press B to jump and Z while in mid-air to launch this powerful combined attack. A very handy attack.

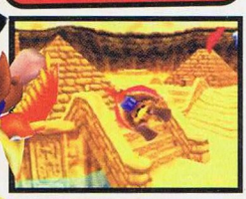
Egg-Firing

Gather a supply of eggs scattered through the levels and hold Z and press Up C to fire ahead or Down C to the rear.

Shock Spring

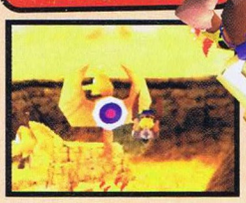
Simply find the pads, stand on them and press A. They'll take you higher than even the flip-flap.

Flight



You need red flight pads to get airborne. Press A to take off the use control stick or R for tight turns.

Beak Bomb

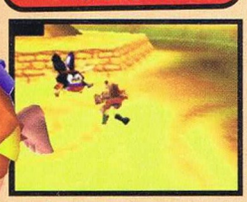


Only available when flying, press B to trigger the attack. Handy for high switches.

Wonderwing

Golden feathers turn Kazooie's wings into a shield to protect them both.

Stilt Stride



You'll need this to get across Bubblegloop Swamp. Get some Wading Boots and press B.

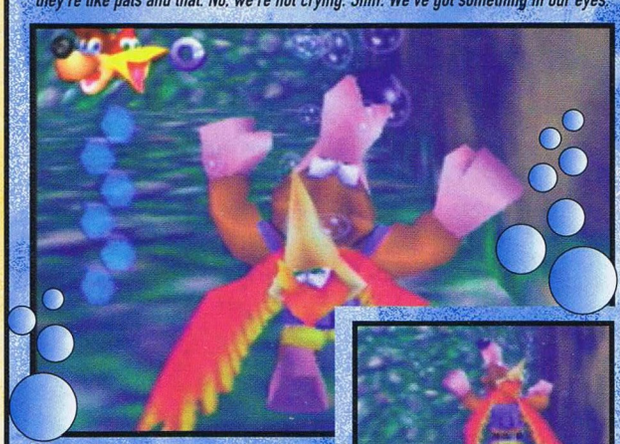
Keep an eye out for beehives if you're getting low on energy.

Things are starting to get chilled, er... man, down in Freezy Park.

As well as looking great there are great things to look at. None more so than Banjo and Kazooie the bizarre bear and bird co-stars. Forget any misgivings you had about such an unlikely pairing. They'll soon win you over thanks to some delightfully animated moves that when combined with the precise controls and camera work mean you'll only blame yourself when they crumple to a heap on the floor on losing a life. Even the coldest of players will sport cheesy smiles when they see Banjo's doggie paddle or Kazooie's squawking peck attack in all its glory. Joined by a strong supporting cast of moles, frogs, giant mechanical fish and the cack-fingered old witch, Gruntilda (all speaking their on screen lines in teacher from Charlie Brown gibberish), such strong characterisation helps *Banjo* step out from the dumpy Italian's shadow. Practically everything in the game, toilets included, has

Got that sinking feeling?

Question. How do you know if a cutesy platform game character is really, truly loveable? Answer: Let them drown and see whether it looks, well, a bit distressing. Remember Mario's water logged corpse floating to the surface in Mario 64? Well, Banjo and Kazooie's watery demise is even worse to watch, maybe because they die together and, they're like pals and that. No, we're not crying. Sniff. We've got something in our eyes.



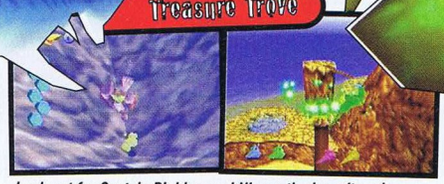
Yep, they're cute and loveable alright... look at their little faces... look how those buddies stay together... what pals!

Level headed...

Mumbo's Mountain

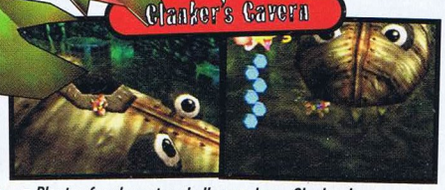
You'll need plenty of tokens to get anything out of Mumbo who's waiting inside his hut.

Treasure Trove



Look out for Captain Blubber and Nipper the hermit crab. Shellfish and crabs will cause you plenty of problems.

Clanker's Cavern

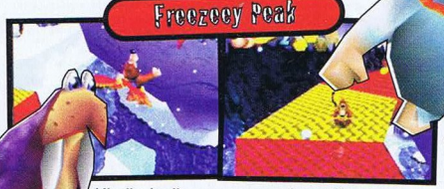


Plenty of underwater challenges here. Clanker is Gruntilda's mechanical trash compactor. Zoiks!

Bubblegloop

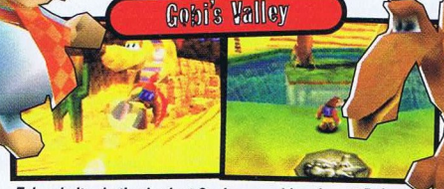
Dark, smelly and dangerous. Thank goodness for the Tiptup Choir and Mumbo, some friendly faces.

Freezeezy Peak



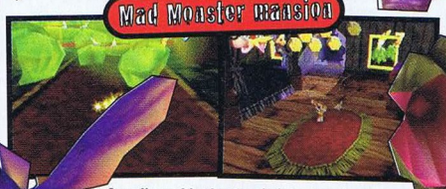
Missile-hurling snowmen and speeding snow sledges make this chilly but adrenaline-packed.

Gobi's Valley



Take shelter in the Ancient One's pyramid and meet Rubee the mysterious snake charmer, but look out for mummified hands.

Mad Monster mansion

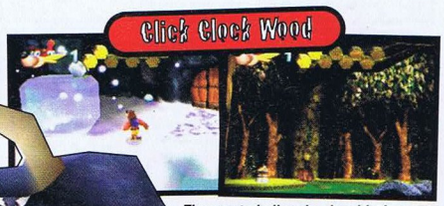


Crawling with ghosts, skeletons and worse, this is one creepy haunted mansion.

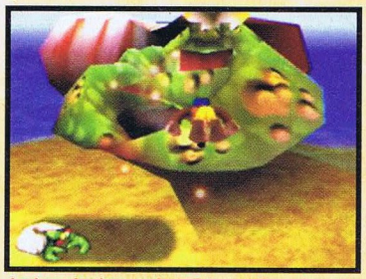
Rusty bucket Bay

Gruntilda's got a ship! As you might expect, everything's got a grudge against you, especially its goblin crew

Click Clock Wood

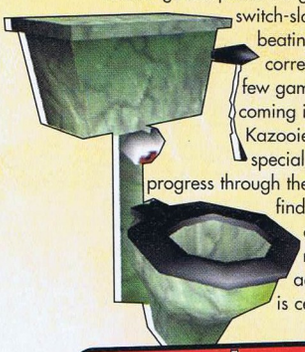


The most challenging level before you meet Gruntilda.



Look out for those crabs in Treasure Trove. A great bit of platforming staple.

Kazooie takes to the skies as the pair aim for the Christmas tree.



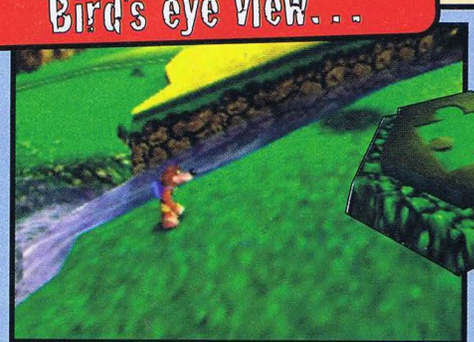
a pair of Disney bug-eyes and wants to be loved.

Don't expect any huge reinvention of the 3D platforming commandments begat to us by *Mario 64*, though. The emphasis is still firmly on jumping, collecting and unlocking the next level. Age old platforming themes like switch-slamming and boss-beating are present and correct with one of the few gameplay innovations coming in how Banjo and Kazooie need to collect special moves as they progress through the levels. Having to find Bottles the mole and actually learn new, increasingly advanced abilities is certainly a fresh touch. But whereas with *Mario 64* you had all the leaping and baddie attacking skills from the start and were gradually coaxed into using them to explore new areas, here there's the sense that your platforming skills are developing in a more restricted from A-B manner. Something that's at odds with the sense of freedom you get.

That's not to say that *Banjo* isn't packed and heaving with imagination. As with *Diddy Kong Racing*, Rare really have shoehorned a mighty amount of stuff in to make it much less straightforward than you might first think. Some of it, like the minute droplets of water that fall from cave ceilings, adds to your feeling of immersion in *Banjo*'s world. Other bits, like the transformation into different

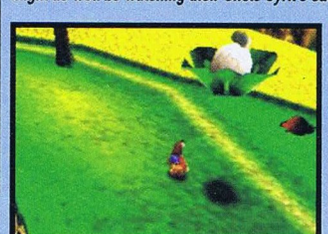
Get into a bit of Monkey Magic. Here Banjo has to deliver an orange to Chimpy the Chimp so he'll raise the platform and take you sky high. Banjo-Kazooie certainly doesn't skimp on the cute!

Bird's eye view...



You have complete control of the camera view but you'll have to put a bit of practice in first.

As any programmer will tell you, possibly going into unwarranted lengths on the subject, keeping the camera under control is a vital part of any 3D game. Let it move about of its own accord and the player might as well be watching their Uncle Cyril's out of focus wedding video. Banjo's camera control is exemplary, keeping Banjo and Kazooie in view at all times and although you'll need to rotate it round using the C buttons, after a while it becomes second nature.



Collectors corner...

Given the sheer amount of stuff you need to collect in the game plus a permanent bird inhabitant, Banjo's knapsack is thankfully of Tardis-like proportions. Here's what you snaffle up and why you need it in the first place...

Jigsaw Pieces

How hard to get:
Ten per world. Start easy, get more difficult like Mario's stars.

What they do:
Fit them into the pictures in Gruntilda's lair to open up each world... nice!

Musical Notes

How hard to get:
100 per world. Makes them easy to find but you need a lot of them...

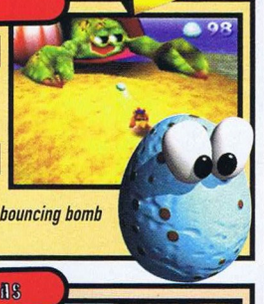
What they do:
To open the note doors which let you access new level pictures in sealed parts of the lair.

Jiajos

How hard to get:
Five per world. These cheery creatures can be a pain to find

What they do:
Get all five and you're given one of that world's jigsaw pieces

Eggs



How hard to get:
Scattered throughout in small groups but you can only carry a 100

What they do:
Banjo can fire them forwards, Kazooie lays a bouncing bomb out the back!

Red Feathers

How hard to get:
Found wherever some of Kazooie's wing power's required.

What they do:
Let her carry a big-boned bear through the air! Each flap higher uses a feather.

Gold Feathers

How hard to get:
As rare as you'd expect. Only ten can be carried at a time.

What they do:
Let Kazooie shield Banjo with her wings to get past otherwise unpassable obstacles. Your total ticks down when in use.

Mumbo Tokens

How hard to get:
Fair-to-middling. Expect to have to find more as you progress

What they do:
Take them to Mumbo and if you've got the cost of the spell, he'll transform you into an animal.

Extra Life

How hard to get:
As rare as Kazooie's teeth, these statuettes are very well hidden.

What they do:
You know. If you don't, then go and get back to your train spotting.

Honey Comb

How hard to get:
Defeated enemies and purpose-built bee hives give them up.

What they do:
Replenish your energy. Find honeycomb pieces to extend your energy bar.

Banjo gets his explorer's hat on to tackle one of the murkier levels in his quest to save his sister.

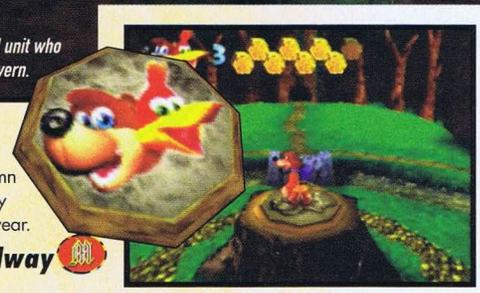
animals by witch doctor Mumbo Jumbo make you scour the huge environments for jigsaw pieces and hidden entrances. Sub-games like the sledge race on Freezeey Park or the Simon Says contest with turtles in Bubblegloop swamp are out and out fun.

Which brings us to the *Mario* question. Aided and abetted by the sprawling, deviously laid out levels and the downright lovableness of its stars, there's no doubt that *Banjo* is a platforming classic. But, and we hate to do this to you, it's not as good as *Mario 64*. Graphically, it's better. Sizewise, it's bigger. In terms of inventiveness and leaps of logic and imagination, it comes off second best. However much you go searching for it, there's simply not the same peerless level design, brain-racking puzzles or sense of wonder.

Everyone who buys *Banjo* will want to complete it and then go back to see if they missed anything. It's a better looking but more straightforward proposition to *Mario*, just as Rare's *Donkey Kong Country* was to *Super Mario World* on the SNES. *Mario 64* is an amazing experience and quite possibly the best game you'll ever play, *Banjo* is a damn fine 3D platformer and possibly the best game you'll play this year.

Robin Alway

Clanker is Gruntilda's waste disposal unit who can be found lurking in Clanker's Cavern.



BANJO-KAZOOIE

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1 or 2
FROM	Nintendo
PRICE	£50
AVAILABLE	Out now

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Atmospherically lit and beautifully animated, one of the finest looking videogames to date. **95**	The music adds atmosphere and the character voices will make you chuckle. **90**	Engrossing platforming with superb levels and plenty do. Not as inventive as Mario 64. **92**	We reckon it'll take longer than Mario to complete and you WILL play to the end. **91**	**92**

JUDGEMENT *This is going to be a classic. It's had us all hooked for weeks now. But it doesn't quite knock Mario 64 off its throne.*

HOT FROM E3

AVAILABLE ON PC

VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

You can play a multi-player version of Commandos in which you each control one bloke? Sounds magic!

Alarm! Alarm!

Just getting to your target is a dangerous business as patrolling guards are everywhere keeping watch. Get caught in the open or leave a body where it can be seen and one of the sentries will raise the alarm. The trick is to click on the guards with Shift held down to see their field of view. As long as you operate while they're looking the other way, you'll be safe.

Get caught in the glare of a guard's vision cone and old Johnny English is likely to get pumped full of lead.

Use the 'eye' icon and you can check out where a guard's looking before you move to avoid detection.

If you crawl in the dark green area of the cone Jerry won't see you, stand up and it could get very sticky as he calls for reinforcements.

COMMANDOS

Schnell! Schnell! It's a surprise attack by Eidos' secret weapon, a realtime game of stealth and slaughter...

"HALT! HALT!" This is the sound a German guard makes before he dies. Of course, if you're fast enough he won't have time to say anything, just emit a sickening squelch as you stick your knife in. Commandos is war (to be specific WWII) up-close and personal, none of the long distance cannon foddering of Command & Conquer, here you get to see the end result of any error in all too graphic detail.

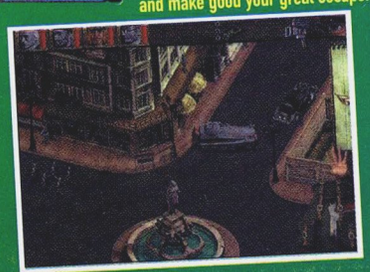
You undertake every mission, every task, with the knowledge that the loss of just one man could spell failure for the whole enterprise. This is because the number of troops at your disposal is so small (a maximum of seven). The essence of *Commandos* is that, with this handful of men, you must eliminate 30 or more guards, disable bunkers, tanks and cannons, rescue prisoners and make your escape. And before you ask, yes, it really is as tough as it sounds.

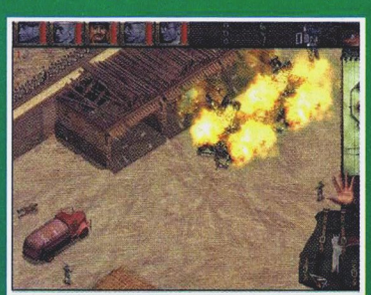
Your task would be simple if the average German soldier in *Commandos* was the same kind of dumbkopf found in films like *Where Eagles Dare*, *The Dirty Dozen* and *The Guns of Navarone*. Unfortunately, all the stumpy, blind-as-a-bat Wehrmacht nonces got the day off and their replacements are vicious, steely-eyed Jerry sharp-shooters. Twitch a muscle in the wrong place, walk when you should be crawling or so much as fart within 100 yards, and they'll arrive to turn you into a rather attractive khaki colander. Suicidal bravery is not going to win you a VC, to succeed you must be patient, clever and cautious. A lone sentry, for instance, doesn't present much of an obstacle if you assess the situation correctly. A quick click of the mouse on him accompanied by Shift will bring up an 'eye' icon that shows you his field of view, avoiding this area you can run up and dispatch him silently with your knife. But of course sentries are rarely so isolated. Even if your action goes unnoticed immediately, if the body is discovered the alarm will be raised and reinforcements will pile in. This wouldn't be a problem if you were a Rambo-like superhuman but while one-on-one the enemy don't stand a chance three soldiers with machine guns can pretty much wipe out your whole crew. In later missions you'll find that eliminating sentries is the easy bit.

Although killing enemies is universally a good thing blowing up targets, rescuing prisoners and getting out alive is what actually counts. This often means that stealth, subterfuge and distraction are the real weapons you need to master and to do this you'll need to know each team member's abilities inside out. The Green Beret, for instance, is the only one strong enough to lug the explosive barrels about, while he also carries a handy decoying device that can be activated remotely to attract the attention of the guards. You'll soon learn to value the Sniper who is the only commando with long range firepower. Unlike most games you may not

In some missions you'll only have two commandos to take on the might of the Wehrmacht! It's a job just keeping them alive.

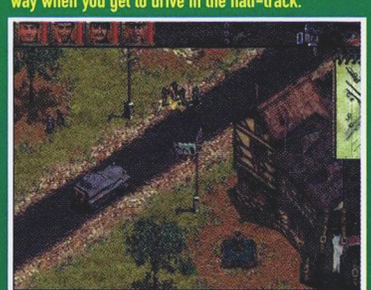
Use your driver to steal a staff car and make good your great escape.

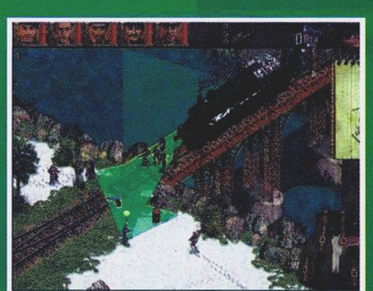




Your Sapper can plant some high explosive to rid you of these pesky Panzers. Jolly good show, what?

"Nein! Nein!" Mow down anyone who gets in your way when you get to drive in the half-track.

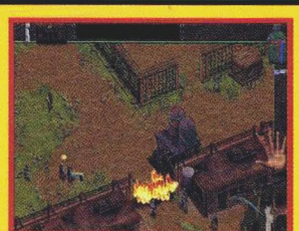




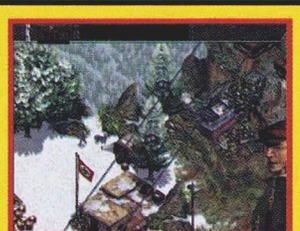
You may be asked to stop and ambush a vehicle. Expect a fire-fight if any Germans are aboard.

Cunning plans

During the course of a mission you'll need to work out how you can approach a target unobserved, silently dispatch sentries or hold off whole platoons of guards. You have to be constantly on the look out for items like explosive drums, trucks, and uniforms that you can use to create diversions or aid your escape. Knowing the abilities of each member of your team is massively important.



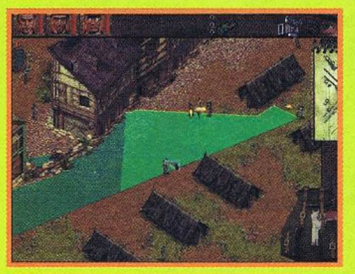
Turn on the tap next to this container, watch the oil pour out and then set it on fire to form a guard-proof barrier.



You'll need to bluff your way on the blower to get a cable car to descend and then take you back up the mountain.

Send in your diver to swim through the dock, climb up the other side and stab the patrolling Jerrys from behind.

Place these explosive drums next to a target and then shoot them so that they blow-up and destroy anything nearby.



Hiding behind things is always a good idea if you can but sometimes (when Jerry's on his own) it's worth coming over all John Wayne.

How Reich you are...

There you are, scouting about, when suddenly you come across your target, a mansion that's simply crawling with the Nazi top brass! The detail crammed onto every screen gives Commandos *a superb atmosphere, and the knowledge that you've got to crawl under the crisp barbed wire and dodge past the wonderfully animated dog handlers just adds to the stomach-churning tension.*

One spacious mansion would suit whole platoon of nazi guards (pets welcome).

Start a scrap in the open and you can expect these tanks to have a pop.

Burn their barracks down! Arson, murder and big explosions, it's the only language they understand.

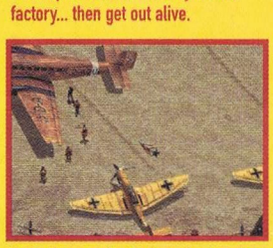
Why you little... This patrol boat is a real pain. You have to time your attacks so that its heavy machine guns don't get trained on you as you take a stroll.

Mission: Blimey, that's a bit tricky

If you think those missions in Command & Conquer *where they only give you one bloke are hard, think again. As well as being one of the best,* Commandos *is also one of the most difficult strategy games ever. Do one thing in the wrong order, get a sudden rush of blood to the head and pile-in and it's curtains for your brave band of soldiers. You'll spend ages just examining a compound, trying to figure out how to get from A to B without all hell breaking loose. Don't be surprised if you get back-seat officers going: "No, run over that patrol in the truck!". Remember though, you're the one who'll get shot if it all goes pear-shaped.*

Blow up a dam and destroy a vital factory... then get out alive.

The railway gun Leopold must be silenced before it can be moved.



You primary mission is to fly the pilot out of here in this Junkers transport.

You might want to destroy these Stukas before you escape though.

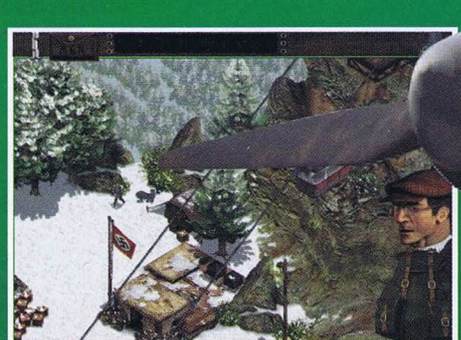
start with all the kit necessary to complete your mission, you may need to steal explosives for your Sapper to use, or a uniform so that your Spy can walk straight into the enemy's camp unchallenged. The Spy perhaps sums up what makes this game so special, once in uniform you can click on his brocade and on an enemy patrol and he will distract these troops so that the rest of your team can sneak past unseen. He can also be used to scout out objectives or even kill unobserved soldiers with a poison syringe and hide their bodies. But woe betide the Spy who gets caught, he'll be gunned down like the dirty double-crossing swine he is.

Commandos is that very rare type of strategy game that manages to make problem solving totally engrossing. Do you shoot the barrels with your sniper or save him for the sentries? Should you use a fuel truck to escape, block a gateway or act as a bomb on wheels? The amazing thing is just how many ways there are to approach each problem. If you're really serious about completing any mission (from the first to the 20th) you must be prepared to save at every step, to repeat tasks in a different order, to stop and think everything through before you act.

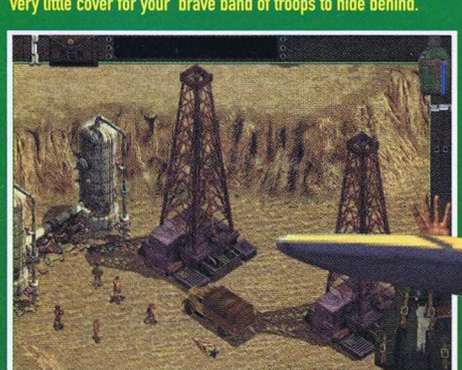
Achtung! *Commandos* is the most compelling, challenging, exciting and downright time-consuming PC title this year.

Pete Wilton

It looks like you've successfully boarded the tram car but what sort of reception awaits you a thousand feet up?



The desert missions are especially hazardous because there's very little cover for your brave band of troops to hide behind.



COMMANDOS

VERSION REVIEWED	PC
NO. OF PLAYERS	1 to 6
FROM	Eidos
PRICE	£40
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Brilliant detail and animation coupled with crisp effects create a superb atmosphere. **89**	The music could be moodier but the voice-overs and speech samples are spot-on. **88**	Clever and incredibly deep the controls never get in the way of the tactical action. **92**	Once you get hooked the 20 missions will keep you, like Jersey, occupied for months. **94**	**93**

JUDGEMENT *It may be too demanding for some but Commandos is one of the best strategy games ever.*

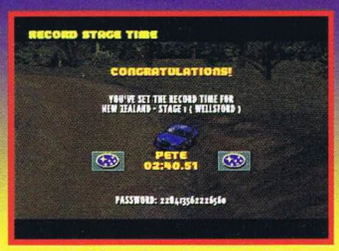
AVAILABLE ON

VERSION PlayStation TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

The real star of Colin McRae is Nicky Grist, Colin's co-driver, who gives you all the cornering advice you so desperately need.

In Time Trial mode it's a lot easier to beat the drivers than in the full-blooded Championship.



As you don't bump into other cars in the one-player you're mostly racing against the clock.

Stuff your rallying rivals by anything more than ten seconds and you're doing handsomely.

Greece is great: It's one of the fastest and most enjoyable rallys due to its grippy dry gravel.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY

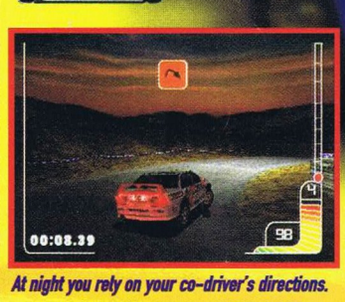
Badger me! At last, an off-roader that makes V-Rally look like Scalectrix. Prepare for monster slideage...

The PlayStation must boast every sort of racing game imaginable. Rage Racer, Wipeout 2097, Circuit Breakers, Twisted Metal, Formula 1 – could anyone ask for more?

Well, yes they could: what the PlayStation still lacks is a brilliant off-road racer. Sure there have been wannabes; *Monster Trucks*, *Motorcross*, *Rally Cross* and, most notably, the massively overrated *V-Rally*, but as yet nothing that manages to balance the thrills against the spills of all-terrain driving. Until now that is.

It's easy to forget that the only interface between man and PlayStation is that wondrous invention, the joypad. It really doesn't matter how flash a game looks, if the controls are twitchy and temperamental its lifespan goes through the floor. Where *Colin McRae* scores against the competition is in its superb handling, especially when coupled with Sony's analog dual-shock controller. Take a corner too fast and you can feel the car start to slide out of control, go in too slow and for every degree of lean on the D-pad the car bites into the road surface, dragging itself round. Get it right and the ride is smooth as silk and you'll effortlessly swoop through each curve. It's just as well that the controls are spot-on because getting your line right is what *Colin McRae* is all about. It doesn't matter if you're sliding sideways, wheels spinning, arse hanging out over some chasm or other as long as you keep up the momentum. Of course there are times when a bit of waywardness can be more costly, so when your co-driver (Colin's mate Nicky Grist) advises "Don't cut" or "Caution, post" pay attention unless you want to vault end-over-end. Yet *McRae* once again out-shines *V-Rally* by refusing to be a slave to realism, letting you crash once or twice on the intermediate level without taking away any chance of a points finish.

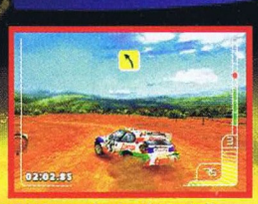
The key to getting anywhere in the Championship mode (you'll have to play this if you want to open up all the cars and stages) is consistency. While coming first or second on a couple of stages does you the power of good, it's not coming below eighth or ninth on the others that really makes the difference – your total time for the whole rally (up to seven stages) is added up and if you don't manage sixth place or better overall you won't gain access to the next rally. What makes this tough is not just the fact that there are 52 different stages to learn but that you have to get a decent time under so many different conditions. Bombing around New Zealand's soggy gravel courses in broad daylight requires a rather different approach from taking on Australia's dust bowl tracks at night. Make it onto Sweden's glaciers or



At night you rely on your co-driver's directions.

It's a good job cows aren't nocturnal.

What? Where? Which way? Hnngg!



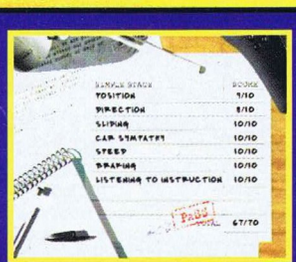
Stirring up the dust in Australia.

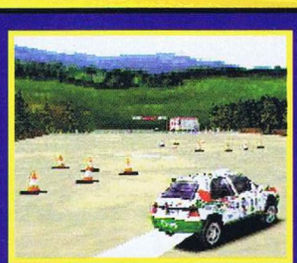
Look! Those are Colin's hands! Fab.

Stupid, sliding hairpin antics take place in Monte Carlo.

Skool for skids

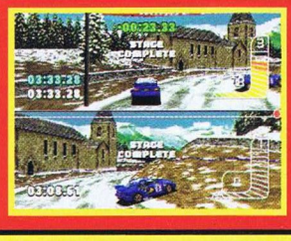
If you're feeling nervous Mr McRae himself will put you through your paces, telling you exactly where you're going wrong in the Rally School. He may not be Mr Charisma but if you can stay awake long enough you may learn something – perfecting your handbrake turns on the cone loops could prove extremely useful in the game proper.





Snowmobile frenzy

For real spills a two-player Monte Carlo race is tops. You'll have to adapt your technique if you don't want to spin out on the iced-up roads. Luckily you are provided with spiked tyres. If you prefer the full-screen view but still want a to race a mate you can use the Alternate option and take it in turns to notch up ever-faster times.



Every two stages you get to repair damage. Time is limited, so fix what's important.

The head-to-head two-player is great fun with plenty of chances to ram your mates.

It's wet and misty so it must be New Zealand. This is the inside view that lets you see the track up-close.

Indonesia's mud hollows and you'll have to change your style again if you want to get in the top six. At a lower level too you're constantly having to assess hazards, like the fringe of rutted ice on snowy courses that will slow you right down or lines of stones that force you to take a tighter line for safety's sake as the slightest touch will send you spinning.

Now, if it's so good then where are the other cars? This is *McRae*'s major flaw: that, like real rallying, you never get to see the other cars you're racing against (except in the split-screen two-player) – this should be a really big deal, spoiling your enjoyment of the marvellously vicious, winding tracks. The truth is that after a while you don't even notice, you're so busy watching the split-times and trying to nudge your position marker up into the points. Halfway through the life of most racing games your competitors become irrelevant anyway as you take on a mate in a time trial contest or just go for faster times, you versus the track.

Over someone else's shoulder *McRae* looks nice but nothing special. Its stages look tricky, its set-up screens detailed and the instructions from your co-driver make you feel like you're watching the *Top Gear Rally Report*. The difference is that when you pick up the pad and start playing every fibre of your racing being tells you that this is the real thing. You'll know that you're going too fast but you won't be able to stop yourself, you'll sense that danger lurks round every turn but you'll still whang the car around sideways, and still spark along the barrier and even risk sliding out of control into the nearest tree. Are you yearning for edge of the bucket seat driving? Then look no further

Pete Wilton

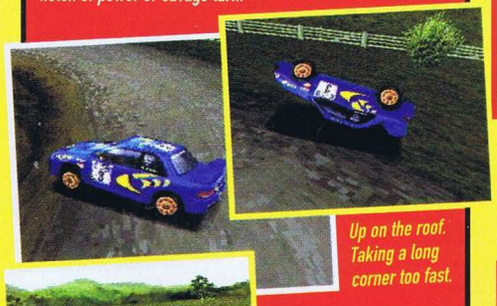
Outback duel

Australia is good for a speedy two-player game as you can bomb along the dirt tracks super-fast. As well as the arcade mode shown here there's also a 'ghost' two-player option that shows your opponent as a shadow car on the track that you can drive through, ensuring that you can still take the correct line however narrow the course gets.

"Look you slag, I've got right of way so sling yer hook! Oh, arse, that's gonna cost me loads to fix..."

Losing it

Overcook it on a corner and, like all the best games, you'll take a tumble. Unlike V-Rally *this won't happen every five minutes and when you do roll over you're quickly put right again to carry on with the race.* McRae *manages to keep a fine balance between controlled slides and losing it big time so that you always feel that to be fast enough you have to risk that extra notch of power or savage turn.*

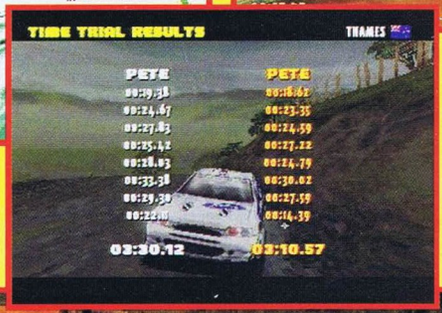


Up on the roof. Taking a long corner too fast.

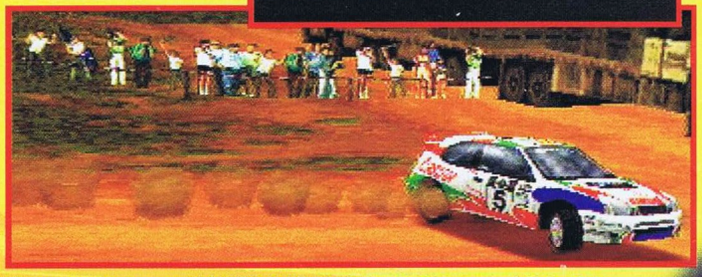
Hitting fir trees is never big and clever.

Sweden: It's full of ice, snow and tasty blondes. Fact.

At the end of many rallys you get a super-special stage to race.



By driving irresponsibly fast you can get some top times.



Here we goooooooooooooo! Controlled sliding is the key to taking corners in McRae Rally.

You da man! Yes it's that nice Mr McRae who lent us his Subaru. Trusting soul.

COLIN MCRAE RALLY

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1 or 2
FROM	Codemasters
PRICE	£44.99
AVAILABLE	July

GRAPHICS 90
Varied and atmospheric tracks plus superb lighting (great night stages) give this class.

SOUNDS 84
Sometimes annoying but useful co-driver advice and all the engine noise you can stomach.

GAMEPLAY 91
The handling is genius and you'll have to learn to drive differently for every rally.

LIFESPAN 89
If you don't mind mostly racing on your tod the 52 super-tough stages will enthrall.

OVERALL 90

JUDGEMENT *Beautifully engineered and perfectly balanced McRae takes off-roading to the next stage.*

AVAILABLE ON PC

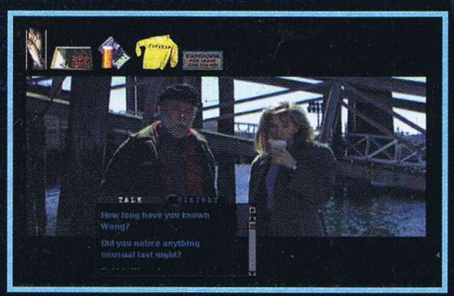
VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Marcus got to see Gillian Anderson at E3 this year which really did make him a very happy bunny. We all think she is nice...

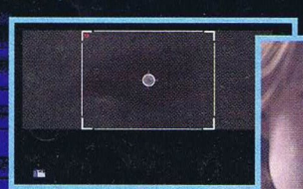
X-FILES

At least he's only got a gun. He's not about to spontaneously combust, turn into an alien or drain your blood... Or is he?



Looks like you're going to have to question Captain Birds Eye at the docks. Wong was your key man, but he's dead.

A nuclear conspiracy? Or is it an alien invasion? Or maybe some bizarre paranormal event? Weird isn't the word.



That looks suspiciously like blood on the warehouse floor. Better get a sample for the labs.

The biggest TV phenomena in the world now hits your PC screen...

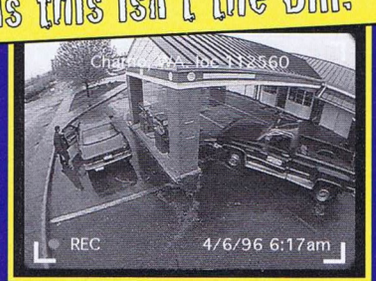
There's a simple equation that has existed ever since they first introduced video footage into games. It goes like this. Games that rely on FMV (for the sake of this equation we'll use the term FMV) equal Coarse, Repulsive And unPlayable games (for the sake of this equation we'll use the acronym). So, FMV = CRAP games. So, it's a scientifically proven fact.

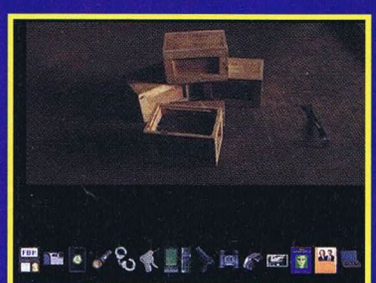
But Fox Interactive have slapped the face of videogaming tradition and kneed that equation in the 'nads by coming up with what everyone naturally assumed to be impossible – a decent FMV game. True, they do have the advantage of being able to draw on one of the most successful TV shows in recent history and it has got the gruesome twosome, Mulder and Scully in it – which means that millions of X-ophiles will be putting aside their conspiracy theories and craving this instead.

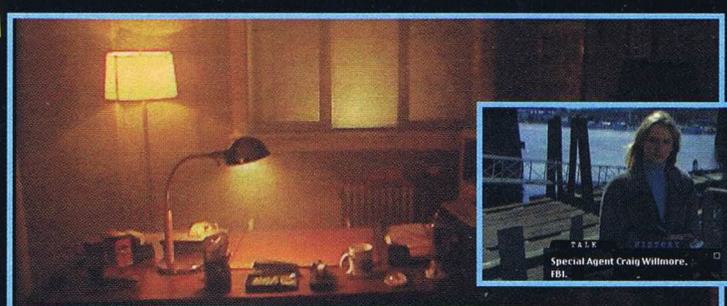
But Fox have pulled a bit of a fast one. You are not Mulder or Scully. You are Craig Joshua Willmore, golden boy of the FBI and avid civil war researcher. You've been assigned to find Mulder and Scully after they mysteriously vanish in the intro sequence (usual X-Files stuff – empty warehouse, strange noises, weird

Ten reasons this isn't the Bill!

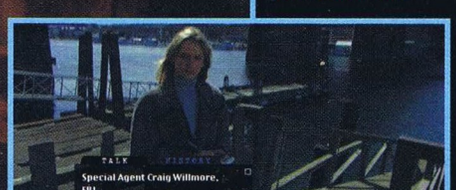
1. Disappearing agents renowned for strange cases
2. Your partner starts to give you funny looks
3. Your key witness gets himself murdered
4. The pathologist discovers all is not as it seems with your witness' body
5. Bodies start to disappear from the morgue
6. Hiroshima-style shadows flashed onto walls
7. That bloke in the office with the weird eyes – warning.
8. Those fingerprints – why was HE there?
9. You start to get paranoid that everyone you meet is out to get you
10. Why do a haulage company keep a bomb in their office?





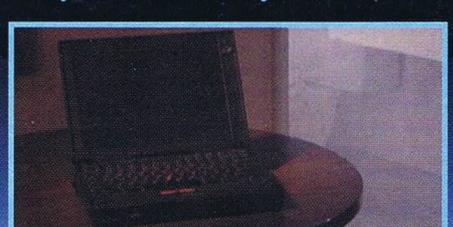


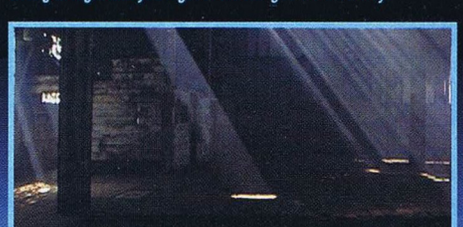
She's cute, but pinch her bottom too much and you'll be in the clink.



This is your partner's office. He starts off on your side but you'll be having doubts about him soon enough.

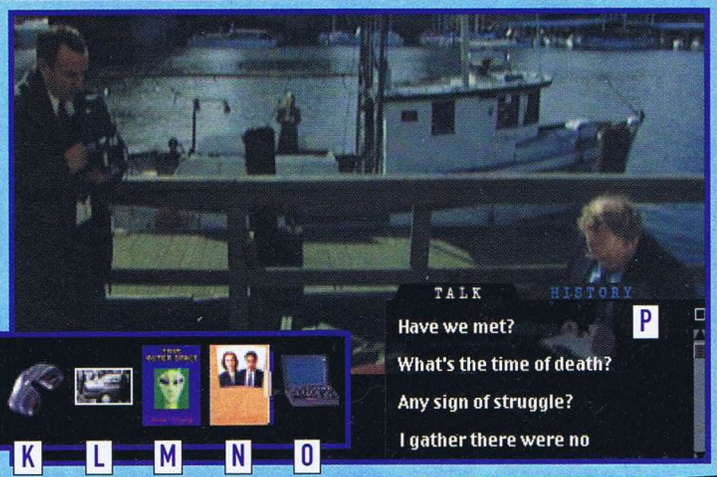
The warehouse is harmless enough during the day, but put a foot wrong at night and you'll get to the morgue the hard way.





So how does it work then?

A Your FBI ID, show it and witnesses may just blub. **B** A digital camera to take pictures for future reference (like car number plates). **C** The evidence kit will hold vital pieces of evidence that you'll need later. **D** When it gets a bit dark use your torch to see around. **E** Handcuffs, just in case you want to get kinky with Scully. **F** Door locked? No problem. **G** Your electronic notebook holds vital information and allows you to move between locations and read E-Mail. **H** Your mobile phone for incoming and outgoing calls. **I** A gun. Can save your life or get you kicked off the case. **J** Binoculars for when your suspect is too far away. **K** Night vision goggles to see in the dark when a torch will give you away. **L** A photo you may need to show to someone you're talking to. **M** Another clue? This time it's Mulder's book. **N** Their casefile on the gruesome twosome. **O** Scully's laptop. It's a vital clue if you can keep hold of it. **P** Questions you can ask are listed here.



men, guns, flash of light, everyone's gone). The theme music kicks in and you're already completely absorbed into the storyline. Sod what the game wants you to do. You need to know what the hell happened in there if you're going to get any sleep.

As you can see, visually there is very little wrong with this. The video is good quality and it looks really slick, as you would expect from anything X-Files related. The show's creator, Chris Carter, had a hand in this and he wasn't going to let anything sloppy get through. You point and click to move around locations and interact with any objects or people that may be there. Pretty standard stuff.

However, with the crew responsible for the TV show also working on this, they have managed to create an atmosphere and sense of paranoia that you have to experience to believe. It won't be long before you start to think that everyone you meet is in on some grand conspiracy against you – especially when your key witness gets blown away and major clues start disappearing. The game's well plotted, that's for sure. Just when things start to get a little stale or you're stuck in a maze-like location (like the ship or the warehouse) something happens that throws you back in at the deep end. The only drawback is that there are a couple of occasions when things won't progress until you carry out a certain action – although the built-in help system means this shouldn't cause you too much of a delay.

FMV games aren't renowned for their depth of gameplay but *X-Files* is going to keep your brain ticking over. And if the clues don't get you going, the typical X-File ingredients will. When bodies go missing from the morgue and the pathologist starts saying, "This is bizarre," you know things are going to start getting weird – and they do. One of the game's strengths is its control system. You'll never have to read the manual or worry about how something works because it is all so bleedin' obvious and easy to use. All the hard work is done for you, you just point and click – and try to avoid embarrassing and life threatening mistakes.

Just to keep you on your toes, if you are on stake outs or surveillance jobs and make a distinctly un-Mulder like move, you'll probably be rewarded with a bullet in the back of the head and a lovely end-sequence with your body in the morgue. Maybe the explosion in the haulage company offices is more to your liking. While these sequences tend to bring the game to an abrupt end it will normally throw you back in just before you died, but you will have saved your game anyway won't you?

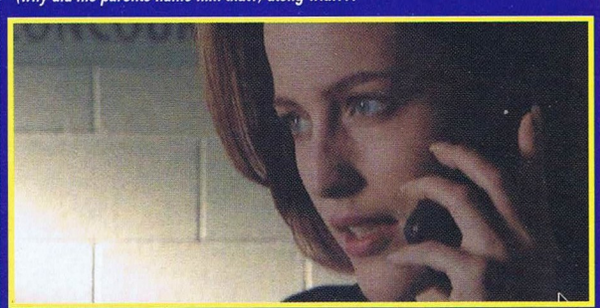
Although it looks great and has the kind of atmosphere and tension that probably isn't good for you, *X-Files* does have the odd problem. It's not the biggest game in the world for a start. And as with most FMV games it tends to be a bit linear. The game also won't progress until you have done the right job or found the right object, which can lead to some frustrating exploring of locations. But don't let that put you off, because *X-Files* packs in enough thrills to make perseverance worthwhile.

So, yes this is an FMV game, but when you think about it, it couldn't have really been anything else could it? It is however, a hell of an experience and any X-Files fan is going to feel right at home with the familiar characters, messed in the head plot and the conspiracies. It is the best FMV game so far although ultimately may prove a little too short to appeal to any non-X-Files gamers. Entertaining and spookily bizarre, just like the TV show.

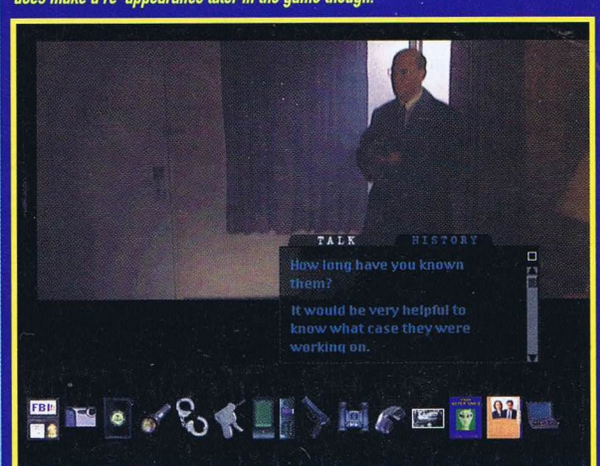
Les Ellis

Who do you think you are?

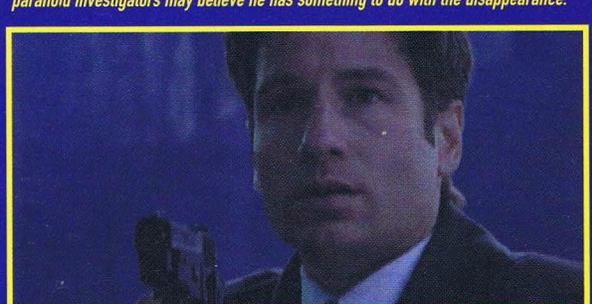
While this game introduces a lot of new faces, there're some old gimmers you'll recognise if you're a fan. Cancerman is here (why did his parents name him that?) along with...



Dana Scully. Her blood is in the warehouse which is probably not a good sign. She does make a re-appearance later in the game though.



Skinner is the poor sap who's been put in charge of the gruesome twosome. The more paranoid investigators may believe he has something to do with the disappearance.



Fox Mulder is a bit of a paranoid UFO freak who thinks everyone is out to get him. Funnily enough they are... it's your job to rescue the guy.

Five days into your investigation and you end up in Alaska following your latest suspect (of which there are many). I just hope he manages to stay alive for long enough to answer a few questions for me.

Your mobile phone is your link to the investigative world when you're out on the job. Be prepared to hear a lot of annoying answerphone messages though.

X-FILES

VERSION REVIEWED	PC
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Fox Interactive
PRICE	£39.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS 87
The FMV's great, there are plenty of locations and people. Looks as good as the show.

SOUNDS 90
Well scripted absorbing dialogue soon gets you into the plot. Spooky music and effects too.

GAMEPLAY 82
You get to interact with locations, people and items and there's a lot to get your head round.

LIFESPAN 78
Not huge, but massively entertaining. You will come back to it for more of the weirdness.

OVERALL 80

JUDGEMENT Even if you're not a fan of the TV show, this is very playable and entertaining. Simply the best X-Files experience.

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GAMESMASTER

Your comprehensive guide to the biggest games you'll be playing later this year (and next)...

GUIDE TO E3

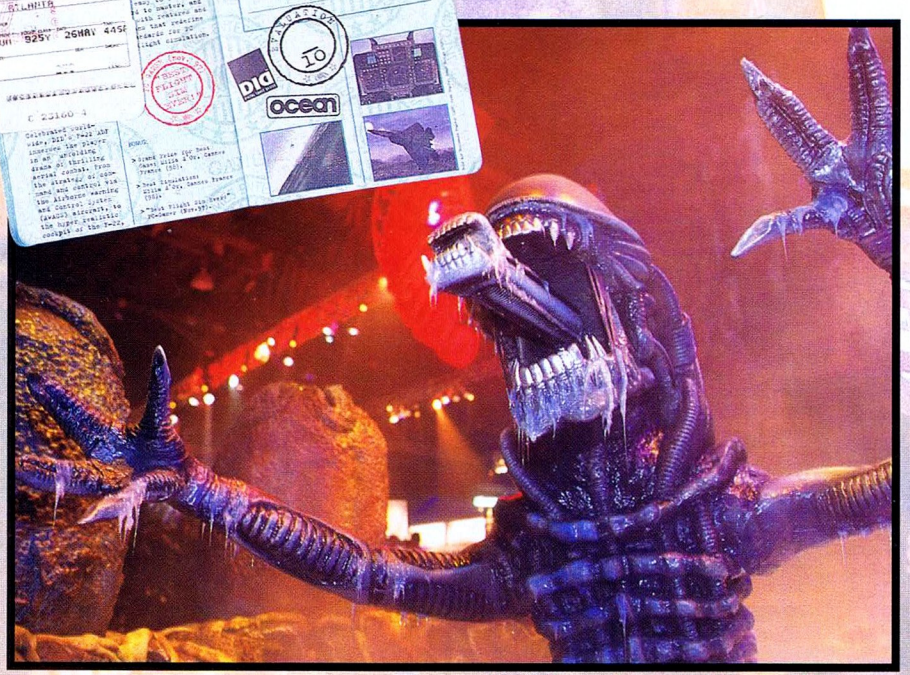
GAMES MASTER GUIDE TO E3

E3. A SHOW SO BIG EVEN THE STARS COME OUT TO PLAY. TAKE A LOOK AT THE HOTTEST GAMES ON EARTH!

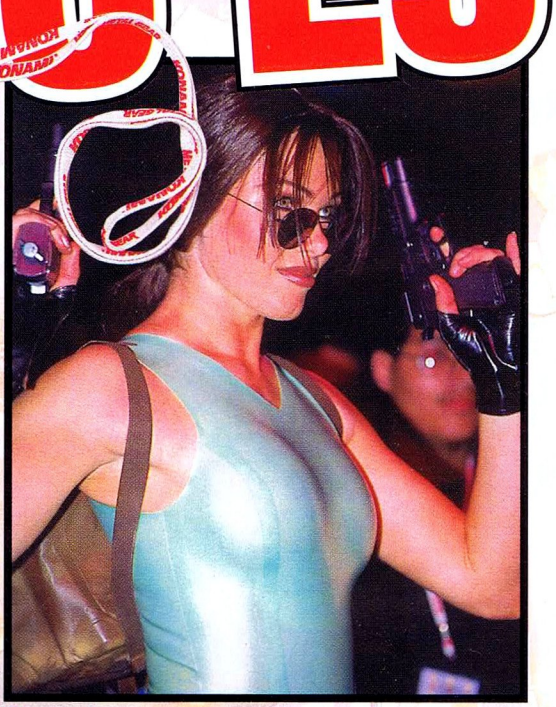
Travelling half way around the world to pay a visit to Atlanta in the good old US of A, just to play videogames is a tough job, but someone has to do it.

And, being there between the 28th and 30th of May meant we got to try out the biggest and most eagerly awaited titles months before they are due to hit the UK shops. So, while our evenings may have been spent hob-nobbing with the stars in swish clubs, we spent every second of every day sweating over joypads to bring you the very latest details on the games you've been reading about for months and the new titles that are all jostling for your attention. Everyone who is anyone had something new to announce at E3. Sega had Dreamcast, Sony had *Spyro* and Nintendo had *Zelda*.

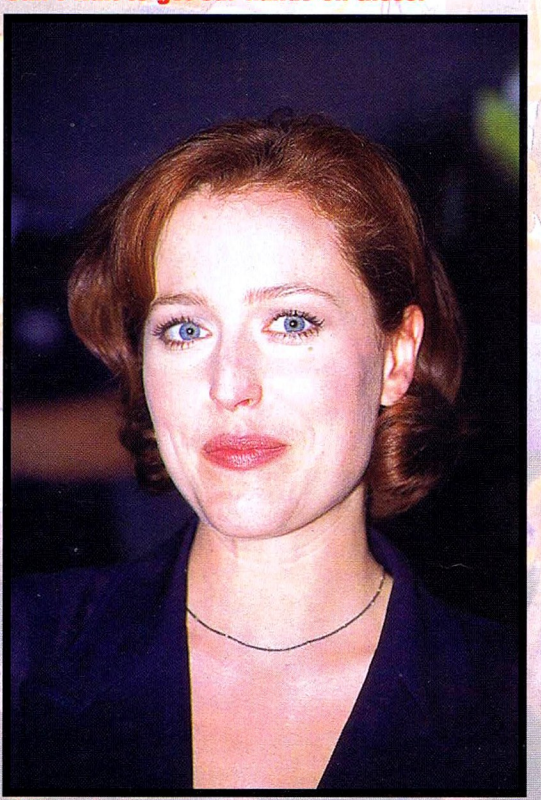
So pull up a chair, relax and get ready for a piece of gaming heaven as GamesMaster takes you on a guided tour of the movers and shakers at the biggest (not to mention loudest) videogames show in the world. Welcome to E3.



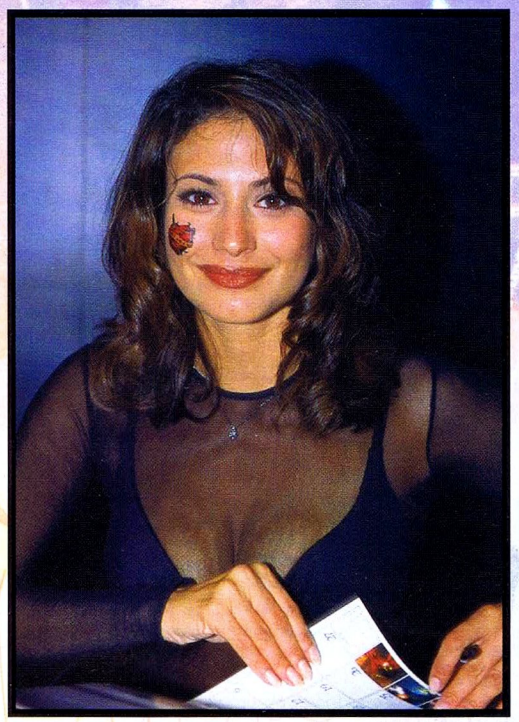
Thankfully not a personal appearance by the universe's most deadly alien species though you couldn't help but feel slightly intimidated by them.



Wow, what an amazing pair of sunglasses. Can't wait to get our hands on those.



Gillian Anderson was there too, surrounded by lots of very big men with guns.

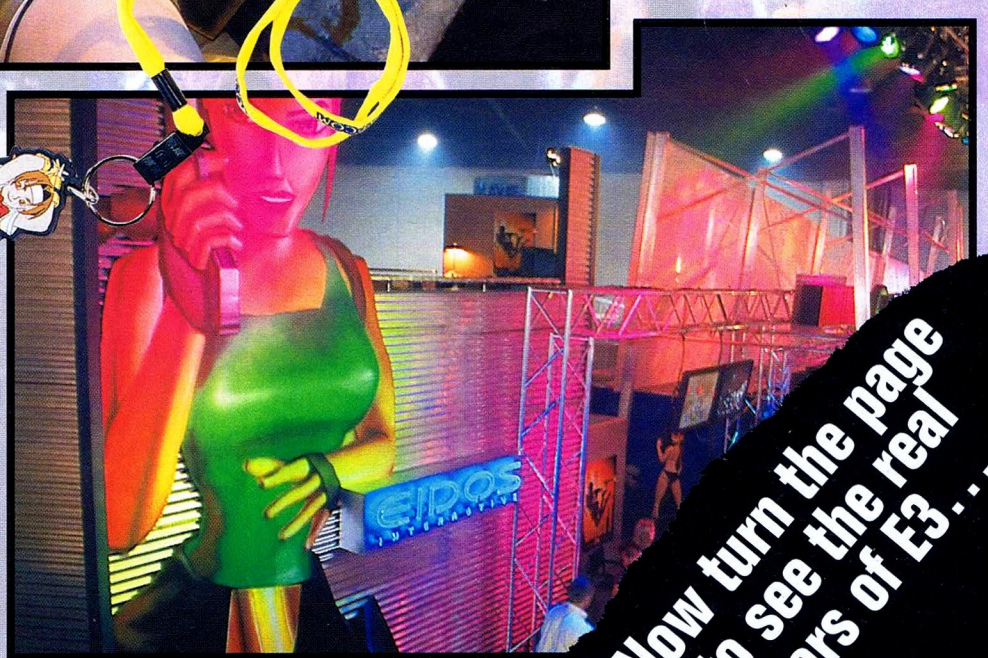


Another preddy ladee. Don't know what she was handing out but we went back for more.

Near-naked women led to crowded stands. Go figure.

Scantily clad girls were everywhere. Any excuse, eh?

A game so good, even Nintendo gaming God Miyamoto had to play it.

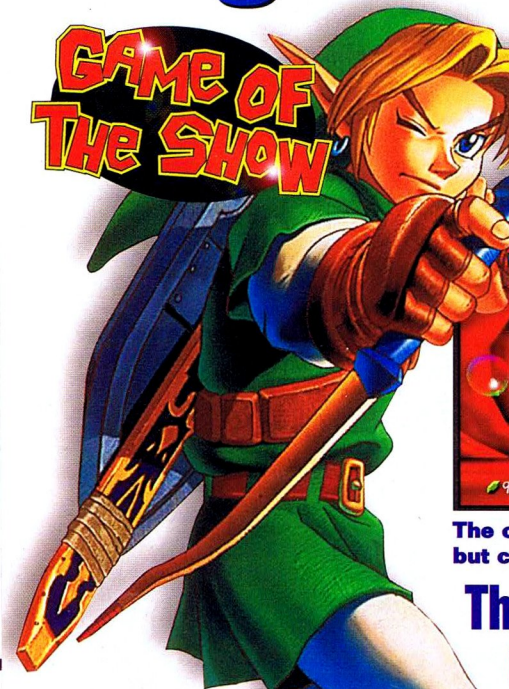


Wherever you went, Lara was towering over you. Well, she is a big girl.

Now turn the page to see the real stars of E3...

Legend of Zelda
Ocarina of Time

GAME OF THE SHOW



The camera falls behind Link but can be locked on enemies.

Climb on and giddy up! You can fire arrows on horseback!

Press A to unsheathe your sword and attack!

The most wanted game in living memory has a release date!

You've seen the shots, read the details and dreamed about the possibilities. But actually playing *Zelda* knocked the lot into a cocked, pointy, green hat. Here are some highlights...

Format: N64
Available: December

Lock On

Zelda's solution to tricky 3D camera problems is a lock on feature. Hold down the Z Trigger to select the nearest baddie, fixing the camera on it so you can move and fight without the camera flying all over the shop. Nice!

Dungeons have rarely looked as nice as they do in *Zelda*.

We've Played It!

- The variety of enemies is truly astonishing.
- We got a Zelda badge for testing it. Ta, Ninty!

New Creatures

Thought your first encounter with the fire belching, fully 3D'd up Bowser in *Mario 64* was impressive? Well you should see the bosses in *Zelda*. Joining the lanky Stalfos skeletons, awesome dragon Dodongo and vicious spider beast seen at Space World, were Gannondorf, who jumped in out of paintings on his devil horse and a frankly breath-taking translucent water monster.

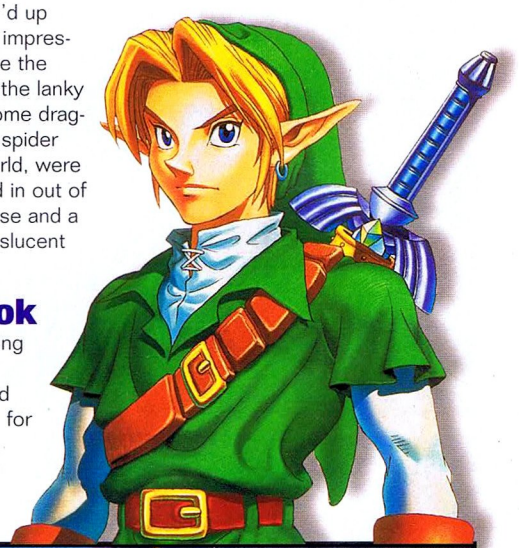
Grappling Hook

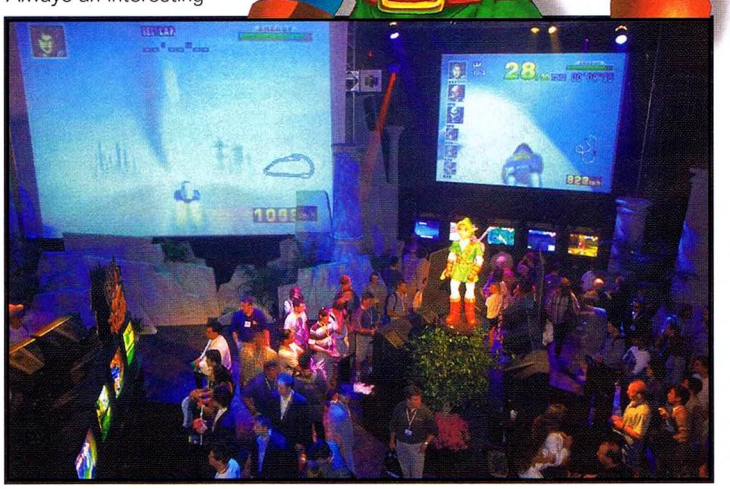
New for E3, Link can swing across roof tops using a grappling iron which could also knock ladders loose for you to climb.

Horse Riding

Always an interesting feature of the still screen shots, once you actually got on horseback and rode around firing arrows it was a sugar lump-feeding joy to behold.

Playing this latest version of *Legend of Zelda* confirmed that it's potentially another Miyamoto Greatest Game Ever in waiting.





Link towered over E3 like a tight and jerkin-sporting elf. Actually getting to a machine was an almight struggle.

Jet Force Gemini

Format: N64
Available: TBA

Rare continued their policy of dropping top secret bombshells when ever the fancy takes them (anyone remember *Diddy Kong*?) by unveiling *Jet Force Gemini*. This years E3 got a good look at this stunning looking shoot-em-up which is set in a *Mario*-like 3D environment.

Featuring three characters, a boy (Juno), a girl (Vela) and a dog (Lupus), players will have to switch between them to make the most of their different abilities, gun down waves of baddies and power up their weapons in time honoured *Contra*-on-the-SNES style. Multi-player modes offers four-player deathmatches or an intriguing, two players on one screen version of the game's story mode,

Being a Rare game and every-thing, you can be sure that the whole thing will be bursting at the seams with bonuses and puzzles. Rather fittingly from the creators of *GoldenEye 007*, you can also expect plenty of sneaking around levels as well as frenzied adrenaline-soaked trigger squeezing.

Although at the just announced stage, *Jet Force Gemini* looks like it's all set to be another Rare jaw-dropper and it promises to combine some of the N64's sharpest graphics with gameplay that gives the shoot-em-up a much awaited return to greatness.

The weapons are already looking spectacular.

That looks like a member of the Gremlins genus.

Fantastic reflections and lighting effects from Rare.

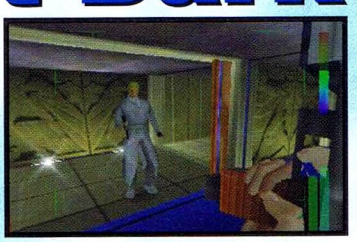
Perfect Dark

Format: N64
Available: 1999

We splashed shots of Rare's follow up to *GoldenEye* last issue.

Perfect Dark is the Bond-free, sequel to one of the N64's finest moments and, judging by the video shown at E3, looks every bit as exciting as you'd imagine.

Starring a female special agent, Joanna Dark and set in a shadowy futuristic world of aliens and sinister corporations, Rare promise a bigger, better looking game than *GoldenEye*. The two highlights of the video were a sequence showing Joanna on a hoverbike and a section where she rescues an alien by pushing it along on a trolley.



The game boasts realtime and coloured lighting effects and will also feature full on surround sound.

Twelve Tales Conker 64

Format: N64
Available: Late '98

Rare's other bid for 3D platform perfection is this cutesy ledge-leaper starring *Diddy Kong Racing*'s Conker and close pal Berri the chipmunk.

It allows simultaneous two-player action and even a four-player battle mode. Playing on your tod will differ depending which character you pick. Berri, for example, can't fight baddies herself.

We've Played It!

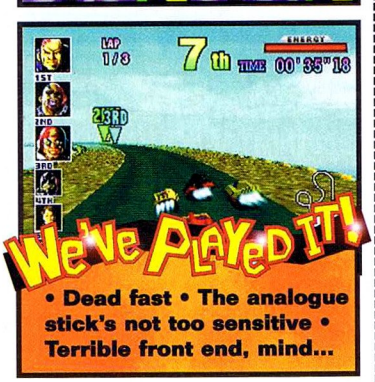
• Yep, it's *Super Mario 64* with a squirrel • Handles just like Nintendo's title.

F-Zero X

Format: N64
Available: Winter

Miyamto's space racer is getting ever nearer to completion and the playable version at E3 went like the clappers. (How fast do the clappers go?)

Some on-lookers complained that it didn't look as good as they hoped. But, as with the SNES original, the track's are fantastically well designed with hover-based momentum in mind. With up to 30 vehicles on screen at one time and Nintendo's trademarked playability oozing from the screen, this could set a ridiculously high standard for *Wipeout 64* to beat. We reckon this is going to be a big hit for Nintendo's machine.



F1 World Grand Prix

Format: N64
Available: TBA

The N64's serious racer problem could be solved in spectacular style by this Paradigm developed F1 racer.

Graphics are approaching Psygnosis *F1 '97* levels and because it's the official license you get all the proper circuits with track-side detail present and correct. Add in different weather conditions, tyre wear, gear ratios and the like for realism sakes plus nice touches like the Challenge mode, which lets you re-run classic races and it's obvious this is shaping up to be a real contender for champagne-spraying glory.

DON'T MISS... PAGE 38 Banjo Kazooie

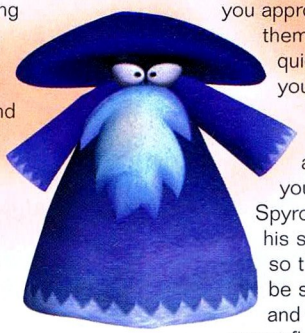
Format: PSX
Available: Christmas

Spyro the Dragon

Meet Sony's new purple, pyrotechnic, platform star!

Sony were winking, tapping their noses and whispering "*Mario* beater" long before E3 started.

Spyro the Dragon's a new 3D platformer that brings the PSX closer to Nintendo's bog mechanic. It was one of the few genuinely new stars to debut at E3. The purple fella has a range of endearing expressions and mannerisms previously the copyright of Nintendo. He can fly, glide, roll and heavy breathe his way through 36 levels divided up into seven themed worlds. Your goal is to rescue his dragon mates from the evil Gnasty Gnorc.



We've Played It!

• One of the most polished games at E3 • Analogue control v. sensitive • Huge playing area.

Graphics

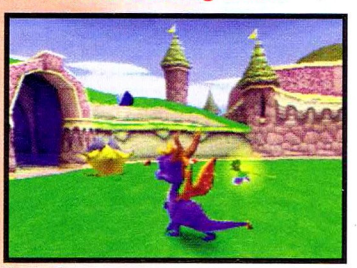
It looked fabulous, finally managing to burst through the cramped levels and lack of freedom barrier that's hampered other PSX platformers like *Croc* and *Crash*. At the back of the screen, you can see distant dots that turn out to be hat wearing monsters or power-ups, and not the merest whisp of misting.

The hi-res scenery and crisp as toast characters move delightfully smoothly. Basically, there's no doubting that this is a second generation PlayStation platformer in the same way *Gran Turismo* was a second generation racer.

Gameplay

Most of the game's baddies are scared of Spyro and run away when you approach them. Track them down and with a quick burst of breath you can flame grill 'em. The butterflies subsequently released are essential for your energy levels. Spyro can also glide on his small bat like wings so the huge levels can be seen from the air and there are apparently secret flying sub-games where you'll need to swoop through rings. It all looks fantastic.

Sombrero wearing birds!



Levels are proper 3D worlds.

Let rip with your fiery breath.

X-Files

Format: PSX
Available: September

Get yourself to page 84 for the review of the PC version. The PlayStation game is looking like a near identical mix of specially shot footage and sinister goings on. Set to come on five whole CDs, the storyline's been penned by series creator Chris Carter.

5th Element

Format: PSX
Available: Sept

An action packed film license with more than a touch of the *Tomb Raiders*. Alternating control between two main characters the emphasis is on solving puzzles, lots of shooting and a bit of platform leaping. Could be a bigger hit than the lavishly freaky film it's based on.

Wild Arms

Format: PSX
Available: September

Not another *Final Fantasy 7* but a decent action RPG in its own right. The game uses the same SNES-style top down view as *Aundra* for most of the game but includes impressive 3D battles.

Tombi

Format: PSX
Available: August

Some traditional 2D platform madness with the occasional shift into 3D from this bright looking side scroller. Expect some Japanese quirkiness with interesting sounding RPG elements.

DON'T MISS... Spice World PAGE 84

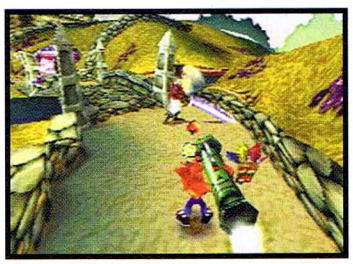
Crash 3

Format: PSX
Available: December

The Bandicoot's back and, inevitably, bigger and better than ever, at least according to his paymasters at Sony.

The third episode of the marsupial's adventures made a sizeable splash at E3 with some inventive time travelling levels, new moves and less linear gameplay.

Crash gets to smash crates everywhere from ancient Egypt and Rome to Medieval England and prehistoric, dinosaur infested times with the orange lummox, as ever, on the trail of the evil Dr Neo Cortex. Remember the great hog and polar bear riding sections from the last two outings? Well, they're in the new game with an obvious highlight of the demo version being a mad pelt across the Great Wall of China on a tiger! A T-Rex ride over the fences is also featured and there are hover boards, jet skis, mini-subs, aeroplanes and motorbikes to add some variety to the more straightforward running and leaping. This time, you can also play as Crash's sis Coco should you tire of the orange one.



We've Played It!

• Into-the-screen and side-on bits now cleverly linked together • Analogue control superb.

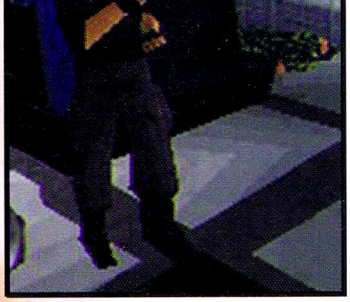
Syphon Filter

Format: PSX
Available: November

A right shady customer. Announced at E3, this stealthy action adventure looks like an attempt to cross *Tomb Raider* with *GoldenEye 007*.

Playing Gabriel Logan, an anti terrorist operative trained in espionage, your mission is to stop eco-nutters from releasing the Syphon virus into the atmosphere.

Naturally, a great big box of guns and gadgets are at your disposal to ease the passage through the game's 16 large levels. Particularly worthy of inclusion in any gamer's spiral bound notebook is the sniper rifle which lets you zoom in on targets in a sneaky way... rather reminiscent of *GoldenEye*. You even get night sights so the enemy can be shot in the dark with the view akin to what the Predator sees when he looks out of the window of a morning.



We've Played It!

• Logical lay-out to the controls • Exciting missions • Slightly rough around the gills though.

Popcorn

Format: PSX
Available: Winter '98

Behind the uninspiring title, lies an interesting debut game from Eighth Wonder, a break away team from Rare.

The game's a platforming take on *Bomberman* with players chasing across different time zones, planting bombs and retiring a safe distance.

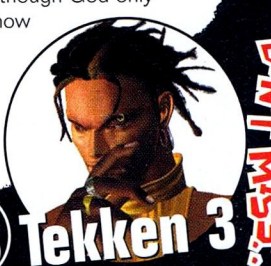
Two characters will be initially playable but you'll also be able to take control of any bosses you beat. Sony are promising addictive gameplay with a precision drawn learning curve of puzzles that get progressively harder and make you actively explore the large, well designed levels. It'll be interesting to see how this compares to the recent disastrous attempt to turn *Bomberman* into a platform game on the N64 and PlayStation.

Cool Borders 3

Format: PSX
Available: November

With the last *Cool Boarders* (a) offering the best snowboarding action on the PSX and (b) selling shed loads, it's no surprise to see more funky-ironing board stuff from Sony with *Cool Boarders 3*.

This should have a brand new game engine to display 36 courses. There'll be over 20 boarders, ten authentic boards and the usual collection of silly sounding stunts to master. What's more, it's been sponsored by QuickSilver, Swatch and (not sure about this) Burtons. The best sounding feature on paper though has to be the eight-player, multi-tap enabled, head to head mode although God only knows how it'll work.



DON'T MISS... PAGE 106 Tekken 3

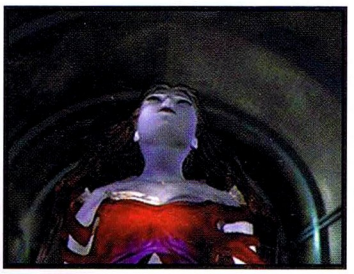
Parasite Eve

This has to be the most eagerly anticipated RPG after *Final Fantasy 8*. If you've been reading GamesMaster you'll know that *Parasite Eve* is a creepy contemporary horror yarn.

Even up against the show's other heavyweights, *Eve*'s cinematic sequences and flash effects look pure class. The big advantage it could have over *FF8* is a more realistic combat system, allowing you to move during a scrap rather than just standing there like a gimp. There's plenty of the depth, with an engrossing plot involving mutant DNA and all the stats screens and varied locations you'd expect from Square. Don't be surprised if fit heroine Aya does a 'Lara' on us all.

Format: PSX
Available: Autumn '98

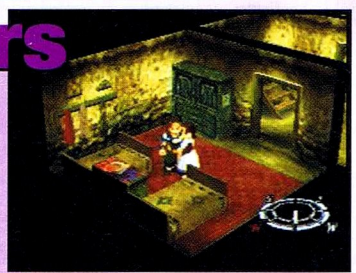
We've Played It!
• First outing for the English version (complete with Americanisms) • As engrossing as ever.



Xenogears

Format: PSX
Available: Autumn '98

Destination: The future. Robots stomp the planet looking for a fight and you're ready to give it to them in Square's other big action RPG.



Two Japanese obsessions combine: Robots and RPGs.

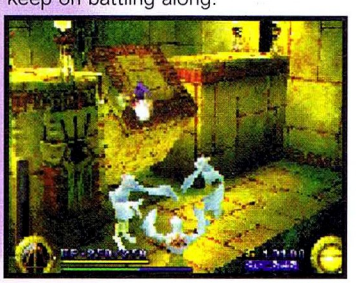
The battle scenes are presented in full 3D and once again stretch the RPG envelope by introducing realtime mech combat. Forget intrusive menus, like a true console title *Xenogears* relies on button presses to direct the action. It's also blessed with over 20 minutes of top cell animation and scene-setting dialogue.

Brave Fencer Musashiden

Format: PSX
Available: Autumn '98

***Brave Fencer* sees Square in up-beat mood with a fantasy adventure starring a cute little warrior called Musashi.**

While much of the game revolves around exploration and squeezing snippets of speech out of the cast, there's plenty of fighting too, this time in a 3D realtime setting in which day turns to night as you keep on battling along.



More action-packed than *FF7* could this be even bigger?

Body Harvest

Format: PSX
Available: Autumn '98

After massive slippage DMA's multi-vehicle blaster is back on track and looking fantastic.

In your war against alien bugs you cross from the past to the future trying to destroy the invaders before they process the whole of humanity into tasty snack-treats. Along the way you get to use everything from hovercraft and jump-jets to Model T Fords against the other-worldly scum. Lots of variety and some amazing effects give the whole thing a nice icing.

We've Played It!
• Fast and frantic action • Loads of wacky vehicles.

Tribal Lore

Format: PC
Available: Autumn '98

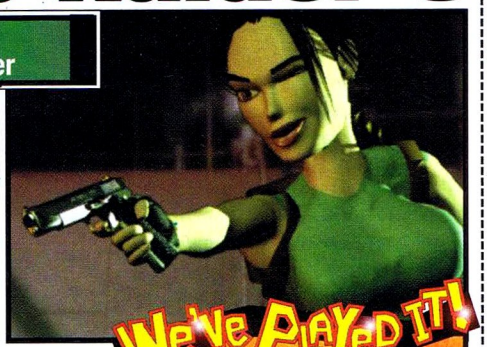
***Tribal Lore* aims for a Celtic feel with four tribes covering druids and Nordic types.**

Build armouries, fortresses and temples to protect your tribe while erecting standing stones to collect magic power. The 3D environment will feature whirlpools, waterfalls, forests and mountains all ready to be levelled by your magicians.

We've Played It!
• Easy to control • Challenging gameplay.

Tomb Raider 3

Format: PSX•PC
Available: November



Polygon Spice's back and ready for more curvy adventuring.

A more powerful graphics engine means richer textures for better-looking levels. The enemies now have better AI and won't just stand around getting shot. The action takes place around the globe and Lara will change outfits to reflect where she is. There are enhancements to the gameplay including new moves. It's also displayed in hi-res on the PSX and supports the Dual Shock.

We've Played It!
- **More of the same really, but who's complaining?**

Daikatana

Format: PC
Available: September

John Romero of *Quake* fame gets his hand on the *Quake 2* engine and adds his own form of magic to it to come up with a time travelling first-person shooter of his own.

Travel through time, battling over 60 different kinds of monsters with 32 weapons. There are puzzles as well as monsters to slaughter. The AI has been tweaked so this won't be an easy ride. You can even have voice communications with your sidekicks in the game. This game has been massively hyped and has come on a long way since the first time we saw it.

We've Played It!
- ***Quake 2* gone mad(der)**
- **Amazing enemy AI.**

Ninja

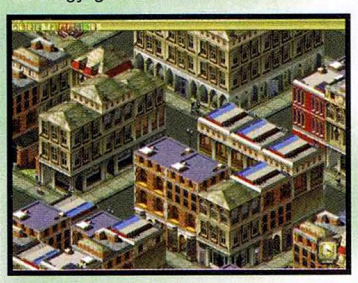
Format: PSX
Available: September

Core Design have forgone the wonders of the *Tomb Raider* engine to make *Ninja* an even faster arcadey-style hack 'n' slash 3D adventure. It's viewed from a 45° angle as you progress through the 13 stages of detailed Jap-slapping and magic casting action.

Gangsters

Format: PC
Available: November

Become the kingpin of a gang of 400 thugs in a 1000-block city. Extort, bribe, threaten and run dodgy businesses. Don't forget to 'do in' anyone who gets in your way as you battle the police for control. The city's 5000 citizens are yours for the taking in this crime-riddled strategy game.



Fighting Force 64

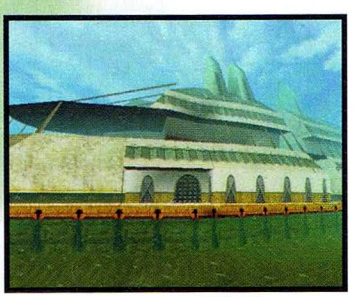
Format: N64
Available: Christmas

You've seen the PlayStation and PC versions of this scrolling beat-em-up from Core. Four characters to choose from and plenty of crooks to kick in. It's got loads of moves plus you can use just about anything that's lying around as a weapon. *Final Fight* in 3D... almost.

Omikron

Format: PSX•PC
Available: August

A 3D arcade adventure where you have to possess bodies to stop a demon taking over the world. The 3D engine looks great and has gameplay tweaks, like the ability to reincarnate into the body of the last person you touch before dying which can lead all manner of larks.



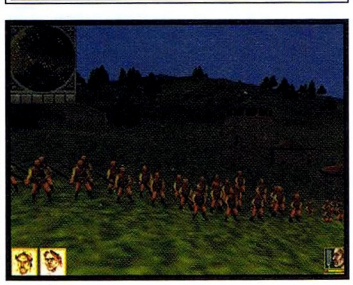
Thief

Format: PC
Available: October

An action adventure shoot-em-up from the guys who produced the first *Ultima* games and *System Shock*. It's viewed from a first-person perspective with puzzles and battles to keep adventurers happy.

Tarten Army

Format: PC
Available: November



This is all a bit Braveheart. Conquer the clans of Scotland or ascend to the Throne of England in this strategy combat game. You control a clan leader who in turn controls troops. It's all displayed in 3D and the realtime action is very appealing.

Dominion

Format: PC•PCX
Available: Summer '99

Another *C&C*-style game but this time with hi-res graphics, You have four races to control and lots of different units. In the 48 missions you fight for control of a planet surface while a bigger battle goes on in space. Watch out *Red Alert*, *Total Annihilation* and *Starcraft*.

Warzone 2100

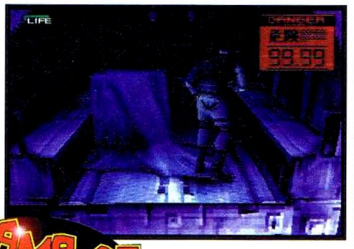
Format: PC
Available: September

Set in the 21st century, this is a realtime strategy wargame where you have to regain control of North America. In *C&C* style you have to research and develop new units to take into battle on the rotatable 3D landscapes. Some units even have the capability of learning as the game goes on. Could rival C&C: Tiberian Sun.

DON'T MISS... Final Fantasy 7 PAGE 68

DON'T MISS... Commandos PAGE 44

Metal Gear Solid

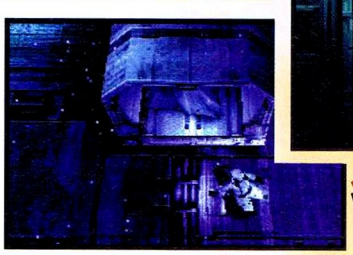


GAME OF THE SHOW

Format: PSX
Available: TBC

Without doubt the game of the show. *Metal Gear Solid* was so impressive even Nintendo's top games designer Shigeru Miyamoto took time out from *Zelda* to play it on the Konami stand.

Check out last issue's massive first play feature if you want to see the game in detail. You can't fail to be impressed by Konami's stealth-a-thon espionage thriller. The graphics are fantastic and the atmosphere won't let you go once it's got you hooked, which won't take long. The bad news is that Konami may not be releasing *it* in the UK this year. So *MGS* might be the game to get your PlayStation chipped for. This is potentially the biggest game ever to hit Sony's little grey console.



We'll be keeping you up to date with *MGS* until its release.

Looks great, sounds great and plays like a dream.

WE'VE PLAYED IT!

• The most solid (excuse the pun) handling game we've played in years.

Castlevania 3D

Format: N64
Available: Winter

All new characters. All new storyline. And most importantly of all, all new 3D environments. Konami's Vampire bashing series gets a new lease of life in this N64 adventure.

Choose one of four characters and the game plays differently, with each one leading you to a unique ending. The way the time of day affects the characters is one of a hoard of extra features that Konami have packed onto the cart. This 3D platform adventure could give the N64 a welcome boost.

When Granny turned into a werewolf she expected her blue rinse to disappear.

Silent Hill

Format: PSX
Available: Winter

Hopping on the *Res Evil* 'horror' bandwagon, Konami are getting ready to deliver the spine-chilling *Silent Hill*.

You have to explore the town of Silent Hills in order to find your lost daughter. But all is not as it seems. Be prepared for all sorts of horrific goings on, including an entire alter ego town in a mirror dimension. The game also features some incredible FMV to rival *Tekken 3*'s and the kind of action that'll leave you wanting to see more, but too scared to play on. A real contender for *Res Evil 2*'s crown.

Silent Hill makes Twin Peaks seem like a normal place to live.

WE'VE PLAYED IT!

• Up on the D-pad is always Forwards – change it Konami! • Dreamy CG.

Hybrid Heaven

Format: N64
Available: Christmas '98

Take *Tomb Raider*, wrap it up in some *MGS* gameplay and add a *Aliens*-esque storyline filling. *Hybrid Heaven* delivers all that in a futuristic New York setting where the President has been kidnapped by aliens. You're the only person who can prise their extraterrestrial fingers off the State's big cheese.

C - The Contra Adventure

Format: PSX
Available: Winter '98

Another classic title gets dragged into the 3D arena. Konami have merged the side-scrolling elements of the the *Contra* titles with 3D graphics and three different viewpoints. The action is as violent as ever with eight new weapons and huge levels packed with grunts and bosses to try them out on.

Survivor

Format: N64
Available: Winter '98

It's a sci-fi *Tomb Raider* with nifty little tricks from Konami that push 3D graphics a little bit further. The game has you exploring biospheres that contain Earth-like regions as you try to escape from a crashed spaceship. You have to master weapons and loads of moves to stand a hope of surviving.

Deadly Arts

Format: N64
Available: TBC

A 3D beat-em-up that lets you design and train your fighter before unleashing them on a dozen other opponents. The backgrounds are interactive and you can use the scenery to your advantage. Three dimensions allow you to go anywhere in the arena. It could join *Fighters Destiny* as only the second decent N64 scrapper.

Rival Schools: United By Fate

Format: N64•PC
Available: Christmas

Its title gets soundly thrashed in the short and snappy stakes by the likes of *Tekken*. But behind that odd monicker lies an extremely handy 3D PlayStation beat-em-up.

Already proving itself a bit of a brawler in the arcades, *Rival Schools* features 14 fighters who are pupils at six different Japanese high schools. As you'd expect from the creators of *Street Fighter*, the scraps are spectacular meetings of foot, fist and face. There's a new style of super combo in the game called the Burning Vigor Attack. Triggering it is the cue for all sorts of *SF Ex Plus Alpha* special effects with the screen turning black and a super move exploding on screen. It also features exciting tag team play where you can inflict massive two-on-one damage. The whole game soon descends into classic *Street Fighter* mayhem but with a level of 3D, polygon-based fights that knocks the wind right out of you.

Tekken 3 has a September UK release but *Rival Schools* could be a worthy contender.

Gets you in less trouble than a real rumble with your local school.

We've Played It!

- **Bloody difficult to get a go – porky *Americans* hogged the sweaty pads**
- **Satisfyingly meaty.**

X-Men Vs Street Fighter

Format: PSX•SAT
Available: Winter '98

Already out in Japan and given a thorough going over by us in GM68, this sees a right old scrap between super Marvel mutants, the X-Men and all your mates from the *Street Fighter* games.

Character-wise, the line up is worthy of any beat-em-up fan's fantasy team sheet with the surprise inclusion of Cammy, not seen since *Super Street Fighter 2*. There's also Gambit, Rogue and Sabretooth, all making their fighting debut. It's 2D scrapping as usual with new locations, better animation and a roll call of ace characters.

Freestyle Boardin' '99

Format: PSX
Available: Winter '98

More 'stand up sledging' made cool but coming from Capcom, so even the tightest of trouser wearers can't help but get interested.

Freestyle Boardin' '99 incorporates plenty of different styles of boarding from downhill half-pipe to free-style jumping to downhill moguls, whatever they may be. You get to choose from five different characters, there are 50 tricks to master and the game engine's said to be good enough to chuck the polygons around at will. All of which suggests, *Cool Boarders 3* might get snow thrown down its back after all.

Pocket Fighters

Format: PSX
Available: October

A smart looking pint-sized spin off from *Puzzle Fighter*. Expect some suitably smooth animation and finger-testing action but with cutesy, Super Deformed versions of *Street Fighter* and *Darkstalkers* characters. Its looks are, to say the least, fun.

Megaman Legends

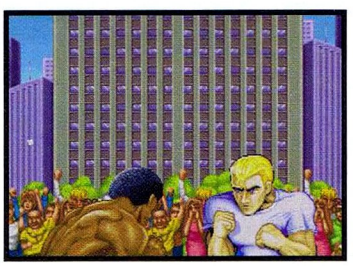
Format: PSX
Available: Winter '98

Mega Man goes 3D! And not before time. This smart action adventure features RPG elements, story sequences and shooting bits, giving the 16-Bit hero a decent game on the PSX. The boss sequences are really impressive.

Capcom Generations

Format: PSX
Available: September

Top notch series of Capcom classics. *The Street Fighter Collection* is already here. Coming soon are three game compilations of *Ghosts & Goblins* and top down WW2 shoot-em-up *1942*. Both have extra artwork and background info.

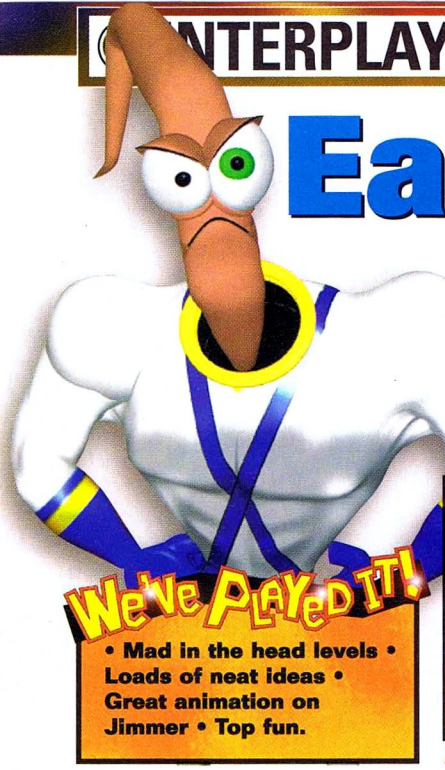


Darkstalkers 3

Format: PSX•SAT
Available: October

Capcom's other 2D fighting ministry comes back to PlayStation in the guise of *Darkstalkers 3*. There're traditional amounts of rich animation and intuitive fighting with the usual *DarkStalker* and *NightWarriors* characters supplemented by a full on four all new demon fighters. More news very soon.

Earthworm Jim 3D



Format: N64•PSX•PC
Available: Autumn '98

The Interplay stand had two familiar faces, Earthworm Jim and creator Dave Perry.

Jim's been laying low for a while since his first, rather disappointing, PlayStation release but he returns in 3D form in a new game for N64, PlayStation and PC. In a plot boasting even less sanity than previous invertebrate outings, our hero has been bludgeoned unconscious by a falling cow and is now cast adrift in his own subconscious. Old enemies like Evil the Cat and Prof Monkey-For-A-Head also get the polygon treatment as you snowboard on pigs, straddle rockets and solve puzzles all in the name of curing Jim's mental illness. Sounds impossible but expect it to arrive this Autumn.

We've Played It!
• Mad in the head levels • Loads of neat ideas • Great animation on Jimmer • Top fun.

Ah ha ha ha staying alive.

Jim walks like an 'ardcase.

Wacky sub-games ahoy.

Wild 9

Format: PSX
Available: September

Shiny were so unhappy with the original *Wild 9* game that they gave it a complete overhaul and the result is the world's first torture sim.

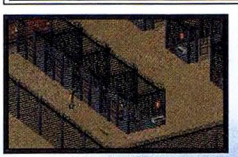
OK, so you float about, vault over chasms and tour the galaxy but the real excitement comes from your main weapon. It allows you to choke, impale, drown or electrocute your enemies. Its 3000+ frames of animation guarantee that you'll see every excruciating detail.

You won't believe how much fun the torture bits are.

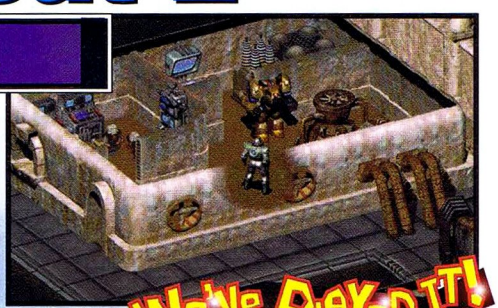
We've Played It!
• Into-the-screen bits blindingly fast • Loads of opportunity for torture.

Fallout 2

Format: PC
Available: October



Love the original, this looks better.



We've Played It!
• Easy to use control system • Brilliant plot • Smart enemy AI.

Catapulting you 50 years on from the original RPG game *Fallout 2* promises tons more mutant, robot, ghoul-smashing combat.

The idea is to amass as much technology and learn as many new skills and abilities as possible while all the time avoiding getting eaten by the plant-life. Better enemy AI and combat should please fans of the first game and newcomers no end. Expect a full report here in the very near future.

Boulders Gate

Format: PC
Available: Autumn '98

Solve a series of murders to avert war in this AD&D inspired RPG. Offering almost 80 hours of gameplay, 10,000 scrolling screens and SVGA graphics it could be a *FF7*-beater. Watch this space.

Descent 3

Format: PC
Available: Autumn '98

The third in Interplay's 3D odyssey has all-new graphics, 15 huge levels, ten new weapons and the chance to fight planet-based enemies. Expect to see a cool multi-player option.

Star Trek

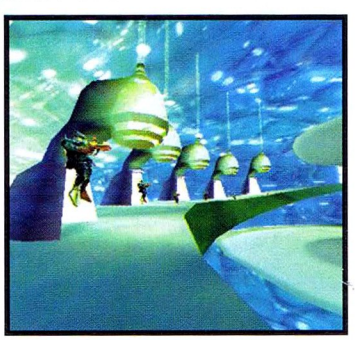
Format: PC
Available: Autumn '98

Latest adventure in the *Star Trek* series featuring the voices of the original cast. Discover the origins of the pointy-eared Vulcans and Romulans and uncover conspiracies, sabotage and murder.

Giants

Format: PC
Available: Autumn '98

God game from the makers of *MDK* in which you lead one of three races in a fight for survival. Alter landscapes, control the elements and eat your enemies across 40 different islands.



DON'T MISS...
Messiah
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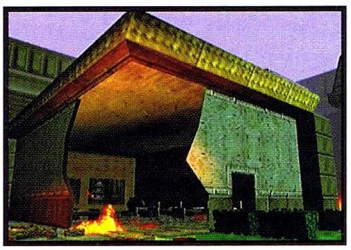
Turok 2

Format: N64•PC
Available: Christmas



We've Played It!

• Handles like its predecessor • Ace new weapons (the crippling leg mines are great).

Playing this makes you realise that anyone who says the N64 can't hack it is talking out of their arse.

More fabulous first-person blasting action with breathtaking graphics and gameplay that grabs hold of you and won't let go. It's bigger, nastier and much more violent than the first game with more weapons and more hapless victims to try them out on. The level design is cunning and leaves you desperate to find out what will happen on the next stage. *Quake 2* may be on the way, but it'll have to go some to beat *Turok 2* with its four-player deathmatch modes.

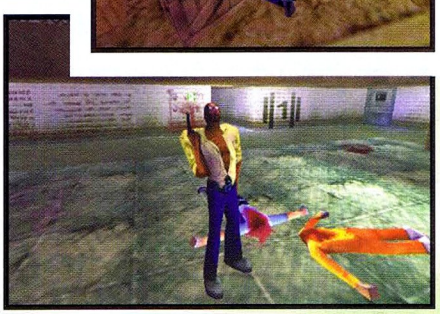
Shadowman

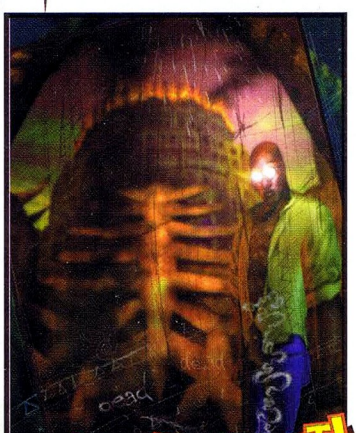
Format: N64•PC
Available: Summer '99

This promises something completely new for N64 owners – horror, gore and extreme violence.

It's based on the comic books and lays like a dark, evil *Tomb Raider* with nobs on. You start off in a lunatic asylum (which is, as you'd expect, a very scary place) and continue your journey through loads of nightmarish levels. Everywhere you turn, something horrific is going to happen. The graphics are already great and the gameplay is promising to match. take a look at our special on page 26 for more info.

The most terrifying game on the N64. The PC version will look top when it's all 3Dfx'd up.



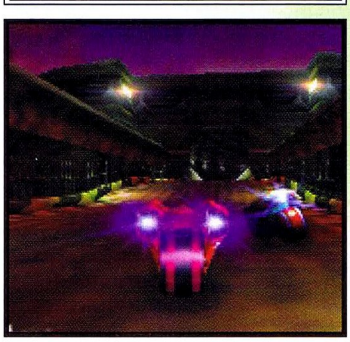


We've Played It!

• You can carry a weapon in each hand • Big emphasis on magic items • Overly complex plot.

Extreme G2

Format: N64
Available: October



The original was the fastest racing game ever – and the sequel is promising more of everything. More tracks, more vehicles and more weapons. It should be a real battle between this and *WipEout 64*.

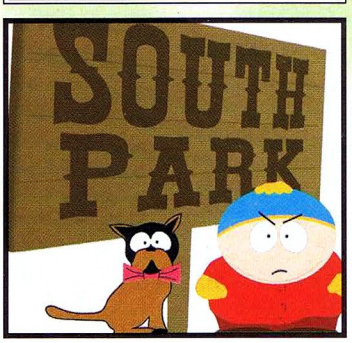
Constructor 2

Format: PC
Available: October

Build your city, move people in and try and interfere with rival city planners. Like the original it's got fun ranging from city planning to vandalism and mafia-style gang warfare – but now set in the future.

South Park

Format: PC•PCX
Available: Summer '99



Join the moon-faced stars of the cartoon smash hit from the States in their adventures through the town of South Park. If you've seen the cartoon you'll know what to expect. If you haven't, go and watch it.

Machines

Format: PSX•N64
Available: Christmas

A bit of a *Starcraft* but bigger and better. Control one of four races and use resources to build up your forces. You can also use first and third person camera views and take control individual units in battle.

GM Tips for the Top

Force Commander

Format: PC
Available: October

After the disappointment of *Star Wars Supremacy*, it looks like LucasArts have got it right with *Force Commander*. It's *Command & Conquer*, but with Star Wars units and characters. Watch this become the Christmas number one... but only if they finish it on time.

Alien Vs Predator

Format: PC/PSX
Available: November

Another *Quake* killer, but this time you choose between the alien, the predator or a human marine who all have different tasks to carry out. The 3D engine and graphics are looking great and the early signs are very promising.

C&C Tiberian Sun

Format: PC
Available: November

The true sequel to Westwood's *Command & Conquer* (*Red Alert* was just a glorified mission disc after all) brings an enhanced graphics engine and loads of new features. Will it be good enough to beat *Total Annihilation* though? PC owners are gagging for it.

Trespasser

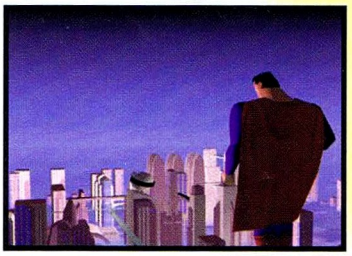
Format: PC
Available: September

After two huge money making movies, the minds behind Jurassic Park turn their big budgets to the PC with this special effects-packed 3D action adventure. Amazing graphics and some cunning design features make this one to look for.

Superman

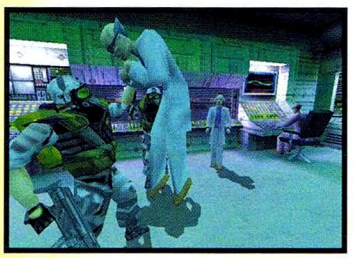
Format: N64/PSX
Available: November

The man of steel's N64 debut features just about every super-villain from the series of comic books who are out to kill you know who. You'll get to fly and fight as you try to rid the world of Lex Luthor and his cronies. Lois will probably be in there but you won't get to snog her.



Half-Life

Format: PC/PSX
Available: Christmas



Take the *Quake* game engine, modify it and throw in some amazing levels and bad guys with a dangerous amount of AI and you get one of the most hotly awaited 3D first-person shooters of them all. Should be great.

H.E.D.Z

Format: PC
Available: September

Mad-in-the-face characters race around mazes, killing each other and stealing heads that give them special powers. Sounds weird? Just wait until you get your hands on it. The multi-player game is totally mental. Cute graphics, huge levels and nutty action should appeal.

Duke Nukem Forever

Format: PC
Available: Christmas

Videogaming's coolest hardman returns for another slice of first-person blasting. This time the game uses the *Unreal* 3D engine, and we all saw how good that was last month. Expect some very politically incorrect action.

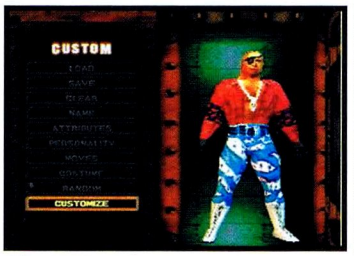
Prey!

Format: PC
Available: Christmas

Alright, so 3D first-person shooters aren't exactly rare right now but ones that look and play as good as *Prey!* are. The graphics engine pumps out the polygons at a heck of a rate and the action is as fast and furious as any other rival to *Quake*'s crown. Utterly top.

WWF Warzone

Format: N64/PSX
Available: August



More men in pants slugging it out using outrageous moves. This 3D effort looks like being the best of the wrestling bunch. It even lets you design your own WWF superstar and try him out in fights in cages and even in weapons matches. Looks like it could be fun.

Mortal Kombat 4

Format: N64/PSX
Available: September

The boys are back in town, with the girls and some new characters in tow in the latest blood-soaked beat-em-up outing for the *MK* series. Forget *Mythologies*, this is *MK*'s return to gaming greatness. It's all 3D and the special moves and finishers look better than ever.

Tenchu

Format: PSX
Available: November

Gives *Res Evil 2* a run for its money in the gore stakes. Take a ninja through massive 3D levels a la *Tomb Raider* to assassinate your target. Loads of people to kill in spectacular style. Open ended approach to the missions will make this one to watch out for.

Show Guide

Hundreds of games were there to play, just check out some of these titles.

Acclaim
- Bust-A-Move 2 N64
- Extreme G 2 N64
- Forsaken N64/PSX/PC
- Turok 2 N64/PC
- South Park PSX
- Shadowman PC/N64
- Constructor 2 PC
- All Star Baseball '99 N64
- NBA Jam '99 N64/PSX
- NFL Quarterback Club '99 N64
- WWF Warzone PSX/N64
- Jeremy McGrath's Supercross '98 PSX

Accolade
- Redline PSX/PC
- Starcon PSX/PC
- Test Drive 5 PSX/PC
- Test Drive: Off Road 2 PSX/PC
- Big Ai PSX/PC

Activision
- Asteroids PSX/PC
- Tenchu PSX
- Apocalypse PSX
- Vigilante 8 PSX
- Tai-Fu PSX
- X-Men PSX
- Quake 2 N64
- Beneath PC
- Legend of the 5 Rings PC
- Third World PC
- Interstate 82 PC
- Heavy Gear 2 PC
- Quake 2 Mission Pack 2: Ground Zero PC
- Sin PC
- Fighter Squadron PC
- Heretic 2 PC

Atlus
- Kartia (Rebus) PSX
- Tactics Ogre PSX

Beam International
- Biotech PC
- KKND 2 PC
- Dethcar 2 PC

Bluebyte
- Game, Set and Match PC
- Settlers 3 PC
- Shadowpact PC

Bungee
- Myth PC

Capcom
- Generations: Ghosts & Goblins PSX
- Generations: 1942 PSX
- Generations: Street Fighter 2 PSX
- Mega Man X3 PC
- Mega Man X4 PC
- Freestyle Boardin' '99 PSX
- X-Men Vs Street Fighter PSX
- Mega Man Legends PSX
- Pocket Fighter PSX
- Breath of Fire 3 PSX
- Rival Schools: United by Fate PSX
- Darkstalkers 3 PSX
- Street Fighter Alpha PC
- Street Fighter Alpha 2 PC
- Iron John Hawk PC
- Super Puzzle Fighter 2 PC

Crave Entertainment
- Milo's Bowl-o-Rama N64
- Redneck Rampage PSX
- Shadow Madness PSX
- Cesars 64 N64
- VR Pool 64 N64

Cryo Interactive Entertainment
- Atlantis: The Lost Tales PSX/PC
- Dreams To Reality PSX
- The Ring PC
- Forbidden City PC
- Intervention PC
- Riverworld PC
- Saga, Rage of the Viking PC
- UBIK PC

Crystal Dynamics
- Gex 3D: Enter the Gecko PSX
- Akuji the Heartless PSX
- Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver PSX

Disney Interactive
- A Bug's Life - the game: Adventure in Microcosm PSX
- ESPN National Hockey Night PSX/PC
- ESPN NBA Tonight PSX/PC
- X-Games Proboarder PSX/PC

Dreamworks Interactive
- Small Soldiers PSX
- Trespasser PC

Eidos Interactive

Lara's back in *TR3*.

- Tomb Raider 3 PSX/PC
- Daikatana PC
- Omikron: The Nomad Soul PSX/PC
- Final Fantasy 7 PC
- Ninja: Shadow of Darkness PSX
- Fighting Force 64 N64
- Thief: The Dark Project PC
- Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines PC
- Gangsters: Organised Crime PC
- Tartan Army PC
- Warzone 2100 PSX/PC
- Dominion: Storm Over Gift 3 PC
- Anachronox PC
- Revenant PC
- Vermin! PSX
- Urban Chaos PSX/PC

Electronic Arts
- Madden NFL '99 N64/PSX/PC
- Tiger Woods '99 PSX/PC
- Knockout Kings '99 PSX/PC
- World Cup '98 N64/PSX/PC
- NASCAR '99 N64/PSX
- NCAA Football '99 PSX/PC
- NHL '99 N64/PSX/PC
- Triple Play '99 PSX/PC
- LAPD 2100 AD PSX
- Moto Racer 2 PSX/PC
- Need For Speed 3: Hot Pursuit PSX/PC
- Road Rash 3D PSX
- Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri PC
- Fighter Legends PC
- World Air Power: Israeli Air Force PC
- SimCity 3000 PC
- Populous: The Beginning PSX/PC
- Ultima Ascension PC

Empire Interactive
- Combat Chess PC
- Pro Pinball: Timeshock PC
- Timeshock PC
- Apache Havoc PC
- Flying Corps Gold PC
- MiG Alley PC
- The Golf Pro PC
- 101st Airborne PC

Gremlin Interactive
- Buggy PSX/PC
- N20 PSX
- Hard War PC
- RPG PC
- Tribal Lore PC

GT Interactive
- B-Movie PSX
- Beavis & Butthead PSX/PC
- Dead Ball Zone PSX
- Duke Nukem Time To Kill PSX
- Oddworld 2: Abe's Exodus PSX
- Rogue Trip PSX
- Streak PSX
- Aeon Flux PC
- Big Game Hunter PC
- Bird Hunter PC
- Blood 2 PC
- Dark Vengeance PC
- Duke Nukem Forever PC
- Duke Trilogy PC
- East Meets West PC
- Huntin' PC
- MIA PC
- Nam PC
- Out Wars 1 PC
- Prey PC
- Star Trek Deep Space Nine PC
- Unreal PC
- Baseball Mogul PC
- Lode Runner 2 PC
- Powerslide PC
- Bass Pro Fishing PC
- Stealth Reaper 2020 PC
- Tras-Am Racing '68-'72 PC
- Mike Piazza's Strike Zone N64/PC
- Sensible Soccer 2000 PC
- Rebel Moon Revolution PC
- War of the Worlds PC
- Tides of War PC
- Total Annihilation 2 PC
- Wheel of Time PC
- Youngblood PC

Grolier Interactive
- Hardcorp PSX/PC
- V2000 PSX/PC
- Xenocracy PSX/PC
- Dragonflight: Chronicles of Fern PSX/PC
- Roland Garros '98: The French Open PC
- Asghan PC
- Tank Racer PSX/PC

Hasbro
- Beast Wars PSX/PC
- Centipede PSX/PC
- Frogger PSX/PC
- H.E.D.Z. PC
- Small Soldiers Build & Battle PC
- Whack & Roll PC
- Small Soldiers Toying with Danger PC
- Jeopardy PSX/PC
- Monopoly PSX/PC
- Wheel of Fortune PSX/PC
- Boggle PC
- Clue PC
- Game of Life PC
- Monopoly Star Wars PC
- Monopoly World Cup PC
- Sorry! PC
- Star Wars Millennium Falcon PC
- Battleship PSX/PC
- Risk PSX/PC
- Axis & Allies PC
- Mastermind PC
- Outburst PC

Infogrames/Ocean
- Looney Tunes N64/PSX
- Mission Impossible N64
- F22 Air Dominance Fighter PC
- F22 Total Air War PC

Inner Workings
- Golden Ears PC/PSX
- Operation Lemon Dog PC
- Plane Crazy PC/PSX

Interactive Magic
- Ultra Fighters PC
- Vangezs PC
- Seven Kingdoms PC

***Messiah* from Shiny.**

Interplay
- Fallout 2 PC
- Baldur's Gate PC
- MAX 2 PC
- Alien Intelligence PC
- Descent: Freespace PC
- Star Trek: Secret of Vulcan Fury PC
- Star Trek: Starfleet Command PC
- Earthworm Jim 3D N64/PC
- Descent 3 PC
- Giants PC
- Messiah PSX/PC
- Wild 9 PSX

Jaleco
- Punky Skunk PSX
- Speed Racer PSX
- Brahma Force PSX
- Tetris Plus PSX
- Tokyo Highway Battle PSX

Kemco
- Shadowgate 64 N64
- Top Gear Overdrive N64
- Twisted Edge Snowboarding N64

Konami
- Metal Gear Solid PSX
- Castlevania 3D N64
- Suikoden 2 PSX
- Deadly Arts N64

Lionhead
- Black & White PC

LucasArts
- Rogue Squadron N64/PC
- Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine PSX/PC
- Force Commander PC
- Grim Fandango PC

MGM Interactive
- Return Ice 2 PSX/PC
- Tomorrow Never Dies PSX/PC
- WarGames PSX/PC

MicroProse
- X-Com: Interceptor PC
- Falcon 4 PC
- Guardians: Agents of Darkness PC
- Ultimate Civilisation PC

Microsoft
- Urban Assault PC
- Spitfire PC
- Age of Empires 2 PC

Midway
- Bio Freaks N64/PSX
- MK4 N64/PSX
- Off Road Challenge N64/PSX
- Blitz N64

Monolith Productions
- Get Medieval PC
- Gruntz PC
- Riot PC

Namco
- PacMan 3D PSX
- Tekken 3 PSX
- Tales of Destiny PSX

***12 Tales* from Ninty.**

Nintendo
- 12 Tales: Conker 64 N64
- F-Zero X N64
- Pokemon GB
- Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time N64
- Banjo Kazooie N64
- Cruis'n The World N64
- Bomberman Hero N64
- F1 World Grand Prix N64
- NBA Courtside N64
- Major League Baseball N64
- 1080° Snowboarding N64

Psygnosis
- ODT PSX/N64
- Psybadek PSX
- F1'98 PSX
- Newman Haas Championship Racing PC
- Wipeout 64 N64

Rage
- Expendable PSX/PC
- Hostile Waters PC
- Incoming PC
- Dead Ball Zone PSX/PC
- Striker PSX/PC

Red Lemon Studios
- Aironauts PSX/PC

Red Storm Entertainment
- Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six PSX/PC
- Dominant Species PC
- Tom Clancy's Takeover PC

Sega of America
- House of the Dead PC
- Sega Rally 2 PC

Sierra
- Half Life PSX/PC
- Gabriel Knight 3 PC
- King's Quest 8 PC
- Don't Touch That Dial PC
- NASCAR 2 PC

Software 2000
- F1 Manager Professional PC
- Flying Saucer PC
- Pizza Syndicate PC

Sony
- Ghost In The Shell PSX
- Treasures of the Deep PSX
- Klonoa: Door to Phantomile PSX
- Everybody's Golf PSX
- Armoured Core PSX
- Tombi PSX
- Medievil PSX
- Spyro the Dragon PSX
- The X-Files PSX
- CoolBoarders 3 PSX
- Crash Bandicoot 3 PSX
- The Fifth Element PSX
- Popcorn PSX
- Spice World PSX
- Pet in TV PSX
- Wild Arms PSX
- Zero Divide 2 PSX
- Syphon Filter PSX
- Grandstream Saga PSX
- Bomberman World PSX
- NFL Xtreme PSX

Square
- Parasite Eve PSX
- Musachi PSX
- Xenogears PSX
- Bushido Blade 2 PSX

Sunsoft
- Hard Edge PSX
- Heter Plastik PSX
- Sky-X PSX
- Puma Street Soccer PSX/PC

Tecmo
- Deception 2 PSX
- Dead or Alive PSX
- Monster Rancher PSX
- Gallop Racer PSX

The 3D0 Company
- Army Men PSX/PC
- Uprising PSX/PC
- Ground Wave PSX
- Vegas Games PC
- High Heat Baseball PSX
- Heroes of Might and Magic 3 PC

THQ
- Rugrats PSX
- Quest 64 N64
- Bass Masters: Tournament Edition PSX
- Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling PSX
- World Championship Wrestling PSX/N64

Titus
- Superman N64/PSX
- Space Girl PC
- Quest for Camelot N64
- Roadsters 38 N64
- Automobili Lamborghini PC/N64
- Virtual Chess N64/PC

Ubi Soft
- Rayman 2 N64/PSX
- Tonic Trouble N64/PSX
- Buck Bumble N64
- Chaos PSX/PC
- Playmobil Action: Hype, The Time Quest PC
- F1 Racing Simulation '97 PC
- Playmobil Girl's World: Laura's Happy Home PC

United Interactive
- Nightmare in the Toy Factory PC
- Republic PC

Universal Studios Digital Arts
- Xena Warrior Princess PSX/PC

Virgin Interactive
- Thrill Kill PSX
- F16 Aggressor PC
- Recoil PC
- Swords & Sorcery PC
- Viva Soccer PSX
- Superbike World Championship PC
- Pro Sports Car Racing .. PSX/PC
- Duel: The Mage Wars PC
- Dawn of War PC

Westwood Studios
- Lands of Lore 3 PC
- Red Alert Retaliation PSX
- C&C: Tiberian Sun PC

C&C Tiberian Sun.

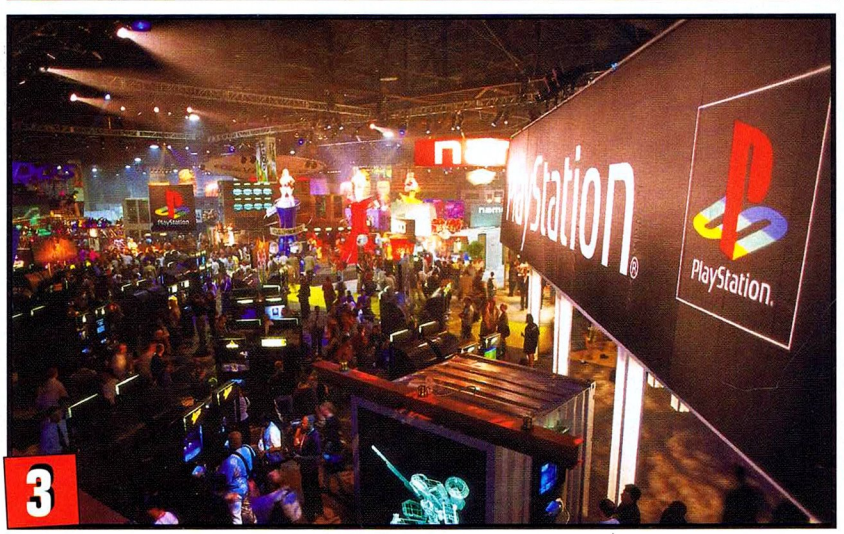
and finally...

Thousands of people flocked to Atlanta for the show to feast their eyes on the biggest line-up of games ever seen...

1

2

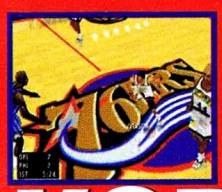
4



3

5

1 Wherever Sega go, Sonic won't be far behind. **2** Massive multi-million dollar stands gather huge crowds. **3** You won't be surprised to hear that Sony tried to outdo everyone again this year. **4** You had to have something pretty hot on show to get a slice of this crowd action... **5** ... and Konami had Metal Gear Solid.



KOBE BRYANT IN NBA COURTSIDE

Alley oop to the hoop! Slam dunk! From downtown! Etc. Nintendo want to play ball.

You know videogames are growing up when even Nintendo, the high masters of cute, start acting cool. First they released 1080°, a baggy of trouser snowboarding game and now they're making whooping noises and sporting ridiculously expensive trainers with this serious basketball simulation endorsed by the NBA's latest star, Kobe Bryant. That's Kobe, not Kevin.

It's got to be said that these are some of the finest looking, very tall, vest-wearing people to grace a videogame screen. *Courtside*'s players are considerably sharper and more complex than their counterparts in that feast of eye dunkery, *Total NBA* on the PlayStation. If you know the first thing about the sport you'll be able to recognise individuals by their build, playing attributes or the less than subtle way their real faces have been stretched across the front of their heads. Seeing them in action, dunking and three-point shooting their tube socks off is mightily impressive.

Controls too, are as nicely configured as you expect from the big N. You can shoot and pass with two buttons right from the tip off but more complicated special moves, trick shots and strategy changes are there to master later. As ever with basketball, defending still comes down to jumping up and down trying to block shots but that's what happens when you base a game around such a high scoring, end-to-end sport.

It's not all whooping and hollering for N64 b-ball fans though. *Courtside*'s players are a bit laid-back, content to amble from one basket to other at a far from explosive pace. Pressing the Z-Trigger gives you limited turbo boost but this only brings them up to what should be their normal board-treading rate. You lose out on the fast break, plimsoll squeaking bursts of pass, run and dunk that make the much faster *Total NBA* so enjoyable.

Although the player animation is for the most part spot on and quite excellent, *Courtside* occasionally produces odd looking passages of play. The ball rattles unrealistically out of the hoop from close range or gets shot at an angle totally at odds with the animation of the passing player.

That's not to say *NBA Courtside* doesn't offer a decent game of basketball, just that with the full polygon pushing power of N64 it should be faster, smoother and more awe inspiring. As it is, we'd have to say that *Total NBA* on the PlayStation is a superior offering, Switching between the two games, Nintendo's offering lacks a few 7ft tall strides of pace and the replays aren't as spectacular. *Courtside*'s just about the best N64 game of basketball then but it could have been, and, dammit, should have been, better.

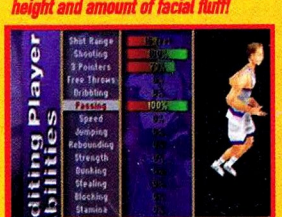
Robin Alway

Freaky!

As if normal basketball players weren't a strange enough looking, gangly bunch of athletes in the first place, NBA Courtside *lets you create your own hideous players and send them out onto the boards to do your evil bidding.*

You can change the age, appearance, height and amount of facial fluff!

Then it's onto setting playing abilities.



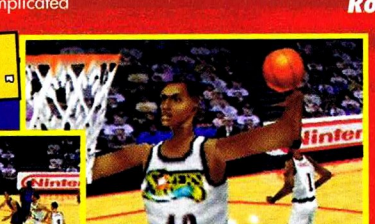
There he is, a 7ft freak of a man with a stunning range of skills

Lets see that again...

If you've just slammed an orange ball through an 11ft high hoop, you're going to want to see it again. Courtside *'s got the usual instant replay, complete with zoom, rewind and pan. Shame the dunks aren't as spectacular as its rival* Total NBA.

View the action from any point on or above the court.

The control stick lets you see it a frame at a time.



Defence is the usual b-ball exercise in button slapping.

Even from above the detail's staggering.

Zoom in and out from any of the selectable camera angles.

NBA COURTSIDE	
VERSION REVIEWED	N64
NO. OF PLAYERS	1-4
FROM	Nintendo
PRICE	£49.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Great looking players but the animation's not always seamlessly linked together — 83	Squeaky trainers, crowd noise and commentators shouting extravagantly when you score. — 60	Enjoyable, easily controllable dunking action only let down by slow players. — 80	Huge amounts of options, teams and players direct from the NBA make it great. — 82	82

JUDGEMENT *This is a great looking, playable game of basketball that's slightly let down by the slowness of the players.*

AVAILABLE ON: PC, PlayStation, Saturn, N64

VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Courtside's got a good Defensive Shuffle feature. No really. Press R to get your defender in a better position to steal.

A day at the (Chocobo) races

Once you're out of Midgar and in the great wide open you'll soon come across a ranch that specialises in breeding strange yellow birds called Chocobos. And blow me down if, later on, you can't raise some handsome specimens for yourself and race them at the Gold Saucer entertainment complex. In fact, it's a must if you want to reach some of the more inaccessible areas of the Final Fantasy *world. Only a specially bred Chocobo can get there, you see.*

Bet wisely on your chosen steed and you could win cash and goodies.

You can force your Chocobo to run faster but his stamina will suffer as a result. Be gentle to him.

HOT FROM E3

FINAL FANTASY 7

AVAILABLE ON VERSION TESTED

PC

PlayStation

DID YOU KNOW

Final Fantasy VII has already been announced for the PlayStation. See our news on page 14 for more details.

It's the world's biggest RPG but is it big enough to pack out your PC?

It's no secret that, last year, the world went just a little bit RPG crazy. Before Final Fantasy 7 hit the PlayStation with the force of... er something very forceful, someone who admitted to liking fighting battles with little monsters by throwing numbers at them was about as well regarded as a new BBC sitcom.

FF7 changed all that and RPG fans are now considered well adjusted gents and ladies about town leading *Final Fantasy*'s creators to think about porting the game over to other formats: N64? Er, not really. Have you ever come across an 80 cart game? Saturn? Well, for a Western release you'll have to exhume the body first. PC? Now you're talking. Which is splendid news for all the PC owners who've never played this type of game before. And they won't have because there's never been a game like this on the PC.

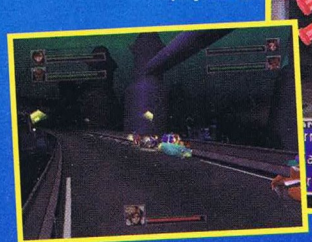
While RPGs on yer good ol' IBM compatible tend to be stat-heavy, number crunchers set solely in worlds populated by improbably-muscled American types and a few, airbrushed art, fantasy dragons *Final Fantasy 7* has a proper story. A real story set in a completely different world where magic, monsters and technology mix together. A story where maybe, just maybe, some of your favourite characters won't make it through to the end (and there are nine playable cast members to choose from). And a story where your next objective isn't merely to smack up the next, vaguely orc-looking, green thing.

Now, this isn't just another point and click extravaganza – the Japanese RPG is a curious beast, rather like a huge story you play through. You're directly controlling the little polygon characters that run about on the screen on those incredibly detailed settings (cunningly pre-rendered backdrops that, through clever layering, your heroes run into, under, over and all around just like they were really there in 3D). You're left to explore and interact with the *FF7* world pretty much as you want. The path it takes is essentially one-way but its linear nature is cunningly disguised with side-quests as well as extra characters and locations that make it seem like there's a larger world going on around the main plot (*FF7* has two, playable, secret characters each with their own story, weapons and special abilities). What ties the whole thing together is a combat system that, when you're out in the open, randomly throws you into battle with literally hundreds of different enemies. It's something that takes getting used to (and can get a little frustrating when all you want to do is get around the next bend) but as compensation the fights are fast, furious and graphically very – no, make that *very* – impressive.

So, *Final Fantasy 7* is the most visually gob-smacking, successful, RPG out there. But, alas, for every Luke there's a Darth and *FF7* PC also has its dark side. The 'PlayStation vs a big powerful PC with one of those 3Dfx card thingys (which is what you'll need to run *FF7* at its best) must mean *FF7* PC is a vastly superior, souped-up, version' is the first to be quashed. The reality is that *Final Fantasy 7* on the

Arcade sub-game time as you attempt to protect your escaping friends.

Finishing off an opponent will let you nick any money or items they may leave behind.



Cloud sets the bomb on a reactor deep within Midgar city. Little does he know what's in store.

Sneaky boss takes it like a man

It's not long in Final Fantasy 7 *before you meet up with the first of the game's many bosses and suddenly discover that it's actually been a bit easy up until now. Not only do these jolly unsporting monstrosities smack you up good and proper but they can be dead sneaky about revealing their weak spots too. Luckily, for this first battle, your comrade – Barret – will give you a hint on how to beat him. Listen up!*

1. The Midgar reactor boss is a giant robotic scorpion with a sting in its tail. Although menacing it's not very smart.

2. Don't worry about its analysing beam it doesn't do any damage, although it is quite pretty.

3. Heed Barret's warning. If you strike when its tail is up you're likely to be on the receiving end of its Tail Laser.

4. Always remember to hang onto Potions and Phoenix Downs if you miss Barret's rather blatant hint!

Monsters for hire

The special effects extravaganza that are the Summoned Monsters can only be experienced when you've got certain Materia attached. They get more outrageous as the game continues culminating in the Knights Of The Round which has ten separate attacks!

Good 'ol Bahamaut flaps his scaly wings and gets ready to unleash firey death.

Summoning up the mighty dragon causes the sky to boil and the heavens to open. These parts of the game are the most graphically impressive.

Bahamaut eyes up his unlucky prey. The more you use him the more powerful he gets.

If you think this looks impressive there's an attack later on that involves the whole solar system.

Cloud summons a monster to do the fighting for him. Lazy bugger.

PC isn't bigger and it isn't really any better. It's nigh-on identical! Also, for a machine that needs to be a gazillion times more whizzy than your PlayStation to run the game, the FMV movies that crop up are often loads jerkier than you'd reasonably expect. Then there's the little problem with those sumptuous backgrounds. Initially rendered with TV viewing in mind they can look a little pixely on your hi-res PC monitor, especially with pin-sharp 3Dfx-enhanced heroes running about on them.

But if there's any justice in the world *FF7* should take the PC by storm. Its Materia and battle system lets you get your hands dirty on the numbers side while customising and building up your characters. Its myriad arcade sub-games give vent to your blasting spleen and it's all wrapped up in a sweeping story so epic that you just might have to go and make a cup of tea sometimes; it's *that* intense.

There are plenty of so-called 'interactive movie' games on the PC but *Final Fantasy 7*, just like fizzy caffeine, is the real thing. Mark Hammil, Dennis Hopper and that bloke who plays Biff Tannen in *Back To The Future* have nothing on Cloud and co.

Will Overton

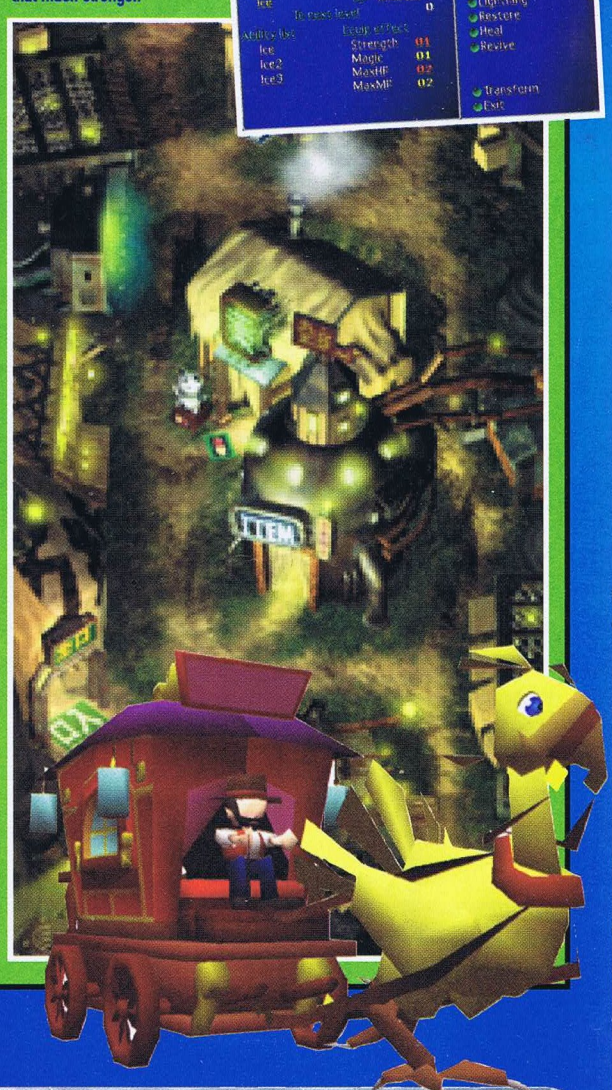
Barret activates his 'Limit Break'. A special attack that speaks for itself.

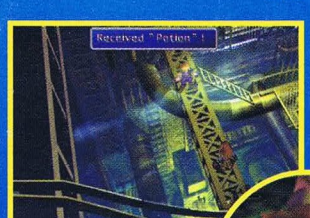
There are loads of 3D effects going on in *FF7* PC and you'll need a 3Dfx card or a specced up machine to get the most from it.

We're living in a Materia world...

Materia is a strange substance that can be found and bought all over the Final Fantasy world. By placing it in special slots on weapons and bracelets you can give you characters special abilities. The permutations are endless and it's a game in itself finding the best setup.

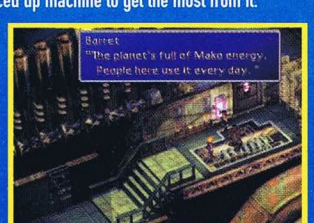
Learn to use Materia wisely and your characters will be that much stronger.





Potions let you heal yourself so keep them handy.

Summoning Shiva means a top ice attack is on the way.



Mako energy is the key to the whole game. The baddies desperately want to control it.

You might only be taking turns but the fights can get really fast and furious.

He may look like a dumpy fat bloke but he'll give you run for your money.

Tifa summons a mighty comet while Barret prepares for his special 'Limit' attack.

GAME NAME	
VERSION REVIEWED	PC
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Square Soft/Eidos
PRICE	£34.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS 91 — *All-round gorgeousness but the backdrops look a bit pixely on your hi-res PC monitor.*

SOUNDS 85 — *Despite fancy sound software some effects are now naff synth, Howard Jones, specials.*

GAMEPLAY 91 — *Get to love all the fighting and there's always something to do and somewhere to go.*

LIFESPAN 90 — *Although you'll probably only play it through to the end once it'll still take you a good while.*

OVERALL 90

JUDGEMENT *The 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' adage seems well applied here. And for PC owners it's a whole new style of game, too.*

AVAILABLE ON

PC

PlayStation

VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Heart of Darkness has been in development for almost five years – costing millions of dollars in the process. Was it worth it?

So many ways to die

That green plant isn't quite as dormant as it looks – as you will find out if you try and jump over it before it eats the purple blob.

Anything with wide open jaws is likely to cause you problems. After all, if it has jaws that big it probably knows how to use them.

Let these shadow monsters get the better of you and you'll end up being pulled apart and served up for a light snack before dinner.

This stage has a series of rather pressing engagements for you to get by. Get it wrong and it'll be the tight squeeze for you.

HOT FROM E3

HEART OF DARKNESS

World Wars have been fought and won in less time than it took to make HOD...

This has been in development for five years. That's roughly three years longer than any normal game. It's cost millions of dollars (not to mention the odd job here and there) and got so out of hand that even the mighty Virgin were so scared that they ditched it. In came big, brave Infogrames to snatch it up (for a cool million quid) and finally get it on the shelves.

The problem for them is that after all this time, expectations are pretty high and it would be almost impossible for *HOD* to deliver what everyone is expecting. After five years though, I was hoping for something a little more mind-blowing than a flick-screen platform game with the odd puzzle thrown in. *Abe's Oddysee* has already done all that (not to mention *Another World* and *Flashback* years ago).

HOD certainly beats those titles in almost every way. The problem is though, the only way it doesn't beat them is the most important. But we'll come back to that in a mo. Graphically this is great. Superb intro and cut-scenes set the atmosphere and everything in-game is superbly animated and it looks like you're taking part in a cool kids' cartoon. Nothing wrong there then. Play it for any length of time though and you'll notice a couple of annoying little quirks like sprite collision not being as spot-on as it should be but you can live with that as the gameplay gets entertaining in those all-important early stages.

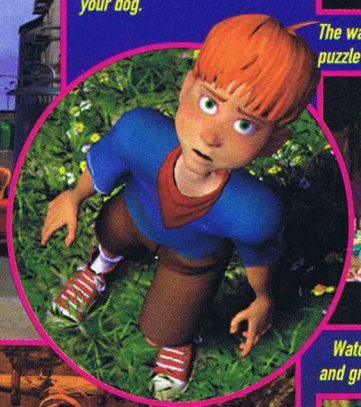
Then it hits you right between the eyes. The 'just how GODDAMN FRUSTRATING can this get' factor kicks in and you're left tearing your hair out. You know how to do the bit you're on. You've almost done it a 100 times but the game quite happily keeps killing you off, knocking you back a few screens and making you do it all over again. And when you're killed off because something is waiting for you in the exact place you appear when the screen flicks or because a creature is positioned in that gap between your straight shot and your diagonal shot – you end up slamming joypads into the floor at high velocity and screaming in frustration.

But then something weird

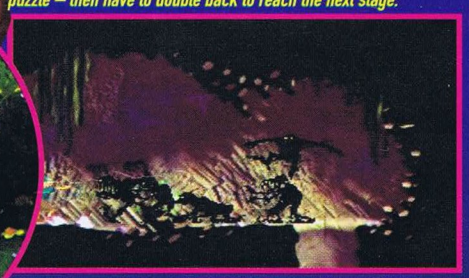
Andy Bit of a Macauley Culkin like. You know he's the hero but you still want to see him hurt. Should he really be out on his own?

Whisky Your cute little puppy who has gone missing. He's only young. You couldn't have had him long. You can't be that attached to him. Just go and buy another one. Why take all these risks.

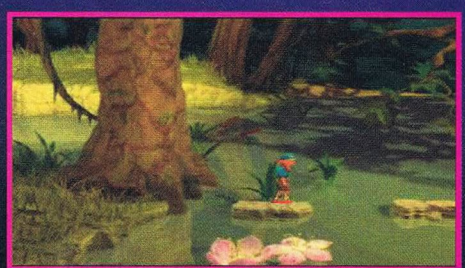
Andy's a ginge. Hey gingeboid bet your mates take the mickey out of you. It's no wonder you spend all your time playing with your dog.



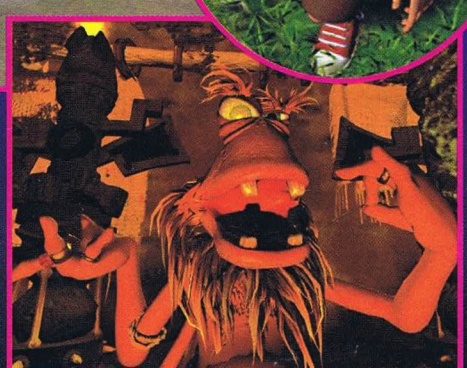
The water levels are a nightmare. You travel for miles to solve a puzzle – then have to double back to reach the next stage.



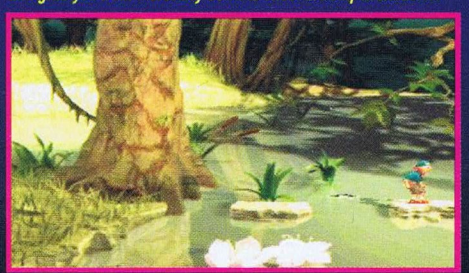
Watch out for the shadow monsters that jump onto the ceiling and grab you from there. Lay down to shoot the sniper shadows.



As lush as the backdrops look, there's virtually no interaction with them.



This bloke is obviously off his face. And he's on your side – boy are you in for it.



It may start off as straightforward as jumping onto the next platform, but before too long it turns into a brainbuster.

There are a lot of rocks and mountains to climb, so there are a lot of chances to try a parachute jump, without the 'chute.

Things are about to get hot around here. As if all the shadow monsters didn't cause enough problems the game's uber-boss appears.

Paddling in the lake gets a little out of hand when these flying freaks appear. Duck under the water or get carried off and eaten.

That must have been some sneeze. Watch the killer snot take out that tree's shadow, giving you a few precious seconds to sneak by.

That lava could be a real pain in the bum literally, as you climb.

Friend *He's the leader of the gormless but harmless bunch or beer-gutted freaks who help you out when they feel like it.*

happens. You'll eventually do that tricky bit (you've got infinite lives so perseverance will pay off in the end) and get through to the next section and the sense of achievement almost makes up for all the ranting and raving you've been doing. You can proudly walk out of your room, see a mate and say, "Yeah, I got past that bit and you should see what happens next". And the stuff that lies beyond a particularly frustrating section is always worth fighting to see.

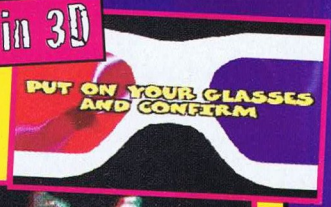
Considering *Heart of Darkness* is totally linear and there's only one way of doing each stage, it's actually surprisingly entertaining. You can't help but love the cutsie graphics and cut-scenes and cartoon-like approach to the action. If only it wasn't so damned frustrating at times and there was a little more of it it would have got a much higher score. It took us about an hour to get off the first CD so this one won't last much longer than a weekend for any serious gaming veteran – which is a real downer.

But before you get too disgruntled and decide to banish this one to the 'wouldn't buy if my life depended on it' pile, bear in mind that the level design is cunning and some of the puzzles will cause much slapping of foreheads as you realise just how obvious the solution was. Unlike some games, which tail off towards the end as the designers desperately rush to cram in everything before their deadline, *HOD* actually builds up to a stonking ending – including a very impressive battle in near darkness – but if you think that's weird, you should see the end sequence where you need 3D glasses to see it in all its glory.

Les Ellis

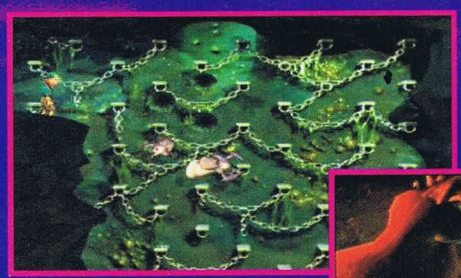
In the black and in 3D

Some games may tail off towards the end, but not Heart of Darkness. *Just check out the dark ending and the 3D glasses stuff.*



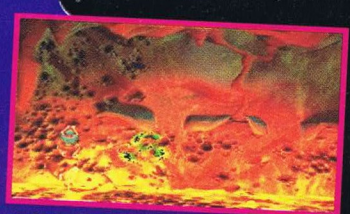
Master *Before you say anything, this guy is no relation to me, alright? Well, not a close relation anyway. He's the boss. The big bad guy. You fight him twice, once in the light and once in an almost completely black level, called 'The Heart of Darkness'. Clever that.*

Servant *He should not be trusted. You should see what he does to your dog when you're not looking. Boo, hiss.*

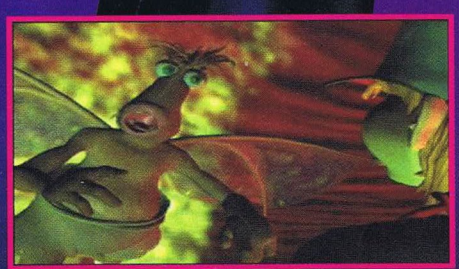


Those slug-like creatures grab at you while you are climbing. Keep firing at them.

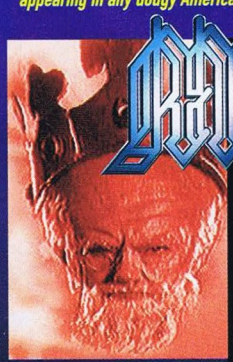
You won't be seeing these gormless friends appearing in any dodgy American sit-com.



As if climbing and avoiding the lava wasn't bad enough, you're also attacked by flying monsters.



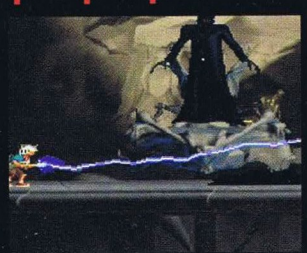
After each level you are treated to some fabulous CGI work. Not bad.



MASTER TIP

LAY DOWN AND HAVE A BLAST

When you come across the giant robots in the later levels try this sneaky little trick. Lay down and keep firing low. This way the robots will have to keep jumping to avoid your blasts. It also means they can't fire at you very often. If they do, just jump and lay back down again. You'll also be in the perfect position to shoot the blobs so that they can't rematerialise into more robots.



HEART OF DARKNESS	
VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Infogrames UK
PRICE	£39.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Damn impressive intro and cut-scenes. Very cute and cartoony in-game. Neat ending too. **87**	Welly this one up and make the windows shake. Tons of effects to blast out. **83**	Occasionally gets very frustrating but the platform and puzzle combination appeals. **70**	Not very big but very entertaining. Some replay value to impress your mates. **78**	**75**

JUDGEMENT *Not as stunning as expected but entertaining. Gets frustrating at times but perseverance is rewarded.*

AVAILABLE ON

PC

PlayStation

VERSION TESTED

MD

N

DID YOU KNOW

When one of your rivals swings a chain or lump of wood at your bonce, you can grab it off 'em and hit 'em back with it.

* Well, the odd crash is bound to happen. Pick your bike up and...

...you can bet some git's gonna ride over you. Go get 'em Floyd.

There are some great action-packed cut-scenes. With girls in leather too.

ROADRASH3D

Summer and the sound of willow on leather. And lead on bone and steel on teeth. Anyone for a freedom ride?

When you're first you won't mind smashing anyone in the face.

Reeling from another bash round on the bonce from a bloke with a crowbar. Life sure ain't easy when you're a mad biker type.

You may want to go roaring down the road looking like a streak of lightning, but the 15 other riders you're racing against have other ideas. Road Rash is back and this time it's in full-on polygon 3D. Except, erm, wasn't the Mega Drive version in 3D, as well? Oh well, that's for the technical boffins to argue about...

Once more you're a daring bike rider who's trying to win cash by racing through streets and country lanes modelled on actual roads in and around the San Francisco Bay area. The higher up the order you finish, the more cash you get. The more cash you get, the better bike you'll be able to afford. The better bike you've got, the better your chances of finishing up the order. Nothing surprising there. Finishing in the top three not only boosts your coffers but results in you qualifying on that course and when you've qualified on enough courses you can step up a level. Here the opposition are tougher – because they've all got better, faster bikes too – also, the courses are longer and therefore the challenge harder.

This is total knee-down stuff with weapons. Keep the throttle wide open and if anyone gets in your way, throttle 'em (well, smash 'em in the mouth with a club). There are only a couple of other things to worry about: the other road users – car drivers who tend to chug along at a snail's pace and are extremely easy to rear-end as you go blasting round a blind corner – and, of course, the fuzz.

Do what you can to avoid the cars because colliding with them tends to slow you down as you go flailing through the air with the greatest of ease and it also hurts your bike. Cause too much damage to your machine and not only is it race over but it's going to cost you a packet to get it repaired. Getting picked up by the fuzz, who tend to wait at the point you're most likely to crash, is slightly less painful in that it merely means your race is over and you're stuck with an on the spot fine.

All this might sound like rip-roaring good fun but sadly it's not quite the giggle you'd think. Controlling your bike can be a real pain as you constantly oversteer from one side of the road to the other. Of the 12 bikes available only one is good enough to see you anywhere near the top ten on the later stages and though it's nippy enough it doesn't generate as much excitement as the old Mega Drive version did.

Andy Smith

Bangin' gangs

The other riders are all members of four different gangs and which gang they belong to dictates what kind of bike they ride – the Kaffe Boys, for example, are all oriental and therefore ride the racing bikes with names like Missileblade and Tsunami while the DeSades all ride 'rat' bikes like the Scavenger. Different gangs also have different thoughts on how to conduct themselves so you'll soon learn which ones to give a wide berth to when you're blastin' past 'em.

Hey! I'm walkin' here!

The American streets are full of not only traffic but people out jogging, sightseeing and just generally crossing the road. All of these then make excellent targets for you to ride over should you have a spare couple of seconds. There's nothing to be gained except a loud "Wahoo!" from your rider!

If you don't want to follow the official route you can make up your own.

This little trick's called a 'Stopie' or something I expect. It hurts whatever though.

Progress through the levels and the rides get longer, and longer and longer.

ROAD RASH 3D	
VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Electronic Arts
PRICE	£34.99
AVAILABLE	May

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Very fast and varied. Road Rash 3D's a looker alright and gives a good impression of speed. **75**	Top in-game choons from a bunch of American thrash bands that you'll never have heard of. **75**	Getting the hang of leaning and steering takes a long time but you'll need to learn. **70**	You won't want to complete the courses twice, although there is a good Time Trial option. **73**	**71**

JUDGEMENT *Avoid fighting if you want to win and anyway, the fighting's not really up to much. The racing's ultimately disappointing too.*

PlayStation Power

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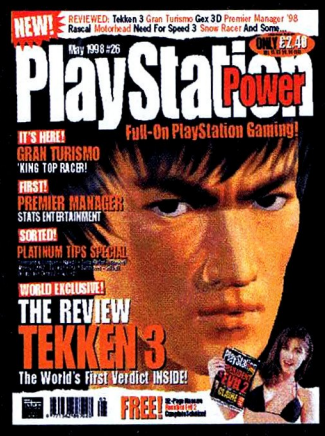

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FIRST!

ISSUE 29 OUT NOW!

Go head-to-head with a mate in the thrilling Deathmatch kinda split-screen mode. Dude.

Now that's gotta hurt. The 8384 reading is how much energy you've got left.

Even though this is a different mission to the one on the left, the energy reading's the same!

When you fire at an enemy a text message on the right tells if you've hit 'em and hurt 'em.

ARMOURED CORE

AVAILABLE ON

VERSION PlayStation TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

You can alter the balance of power in this futuristic world by choosing to work for one or other side. Sneaky stuff eh?

Psst. Wanna buy a second-hand crate of incendiary devices? How's about a new pair of legs? Course you do...

Being a ruthless mercenary might not be the most worthy of ways to make a living, but hey! It's a whole lot more fun than sweeping the streets or clamping cars.

Imagine Lara Croft with a metal exoskeleton and you'll have a pretty good idea of what things look like in *Armoured Core* where you control a rock-hard robot. After the initial test to see if you're up to the challenge you're then asked to choose a mission from a selection offered to you. The harder the mission the more money you'll earn from completing it successfully and. You can expect your objectives to get harder, depending on your experience.

Once you're into the mission the fun starts. Using the weapons given to you (a rifle and a small missile launcher at first) it's then down to you to take out the enemies without getting yourself blown up (should that happen you're going to have to pay heavily to get your robot repaired).

The action's well paced, so you won't usually get swamped by baddies and you can take advantage of the scenery to avoid taking hits (hiding behind things or round corners and so on). Shooting's pretty easy too because once you've got a lock on a baddie the cross-hair sight turns red and you can generally just fire away until your target explodes.

As you progress through the game and earn enough money you can start to upgrade your robot by buying bigger and better parts. You fancy a monster gattling gun on your left arm? No problem. How's about a new head with a decent radar attachment? Consider it done.

There's a good RPG feel to *Armoured Core* in that as you complete missions and buy additions to your robot you can then undertake more exciting and dangerous missions. Sadly though the cup of excitement fails to overflow. Once you've learnt how to tackle the baddies the battles become rather routine and, though the missions are entertaining, you're unlikely to feel as if it's got you by the throat.

Andy Smith

This is not the most inconspicuous robot!

Fire one! A missile streaks to its target.

Not in that colour guy...

If you don't like the look of your robot you can always change its colour. There're a load of default colours and patterns that you can use and if you're feeling really artistic there's a small paint package that enables you to design your own emblems which are then emblazoned on your robot's arms. Of course it won't make a blind bit of difference when you're in battle...

You could have a lovely patriotic emblem if you're English.

Or use one of the better looking default emblems.

Now you don't want to go out wearing that!

New legs? Oh, they suit you sir!

Getting the right set up for your robot is the key to AC. You don't want to fit a set of caterpillar tracks, for example, for a mission that's going to require you to do lots of jumping around. There are weight and energy considerations to take into account as well so even if you can afford that double homing missile launcher you might not be able to use it until you've got yourself a set of stronger legs.

A good central core is essential if you want some fancy extras.

Getting the right bits for your droid is what Armoured Core's about.

Get decent legs to carry heavier weapons.

Sell off any extra body parts if you can't quite afford what you want.

Don't buy anything cheaper than you've already got – it simply won't be half as good.

Running amok in a city is fun until the fuzz arrive to spoil it.

Mind the explosions when you shoot things – they hurt!

ARMOURED CORE	
VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Sony
PRICE	£34.99
AVAILABLE	June

GRAPHICS 75
There're some neat effects and scenery and it's all fast and smooth but not great looking.

SOUNDS 65
The crisp sound of high velocity armaments and some dreadful background music.

GAMEPLAY 75
Sort out your sidestepping and looking up and down buttons and it's plain sailing.

LIFESPAN 80
Loads of difficult missions and a two-player mode should keep you busy for ages.

OVERALL 77

JUDGEMENT *A nice try and, though it's not an unpleasant experience, it's not as much fun as you'd hope it'd be.*

LEARN TO FIGHT THE 'DEAD OR ALIVE' WAY!

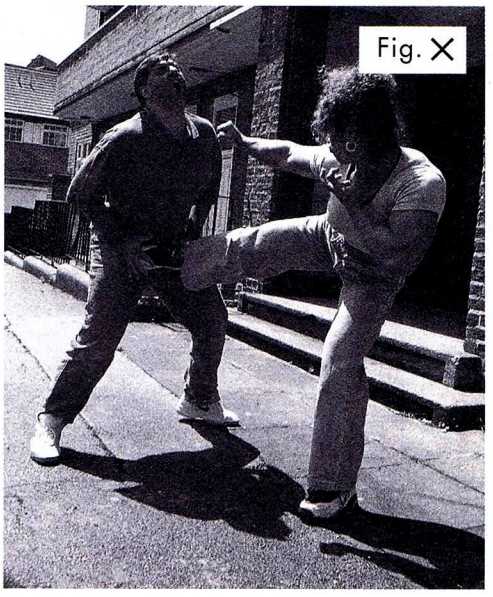

Fig. △ I find the best way to deal with trouble is to *start* it.

Fig. ○ This is one of my favourites, I call it the *Short Range Lariat.*

Fig. × A swift pivot kick into the danger area and—*voilà!*

Fig. □ *Observe.* One brained baddie spilled out on a tarmac grave.

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DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF PLAYSTATION

PlayStation

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AVAILABLE ON

VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Along with the usual trappings of an RPG: turn-based fights, odd dialogue and puzzles, BOF3 also includes a fishing section.

Jackanory

The story behind Breath of Fire 3 *is one of courage, bravery, hardship, woe and um, dragons. Small, cute-looking dragons with 'Whelp Fire' attacks that reduce grown men to ashes abound and you have to work your way through a confusing but detailed intro before you get anywhere near the action. Check this out...*

A dragon in a large blue crystal... not the most common sight in the world.

Ah, but release it and this is all the thanks you get. Bloody dragons. Time for a wander...

BREATHOFFIRE3

With FF7 firmly in place as the best RPG of all time, does BOF3 really stand a chance!

The RPG: a staple diet of almost every civilised computer gaming system since the dawn of time has, until recently, been noticed for its absence on the PlayStation. Sure, the odd tactical affair floated out of little-known development houses in Japan or the States but it wasn't until the release of the mighty Final Fantasy 7 that Europe (and the PlayStation) finally got to sample some of the fruits from that particular tree.

Since then we've been treated to not only the news that both *Final Fantasy Tactics* and *Final Fantasy 8* are both ripe for release in '98/'99 but other companies have been quicker off the mark than Square. Two RPGs that are currently due to appear on the scene are *Alundra* (developed by Climax, who gave us the excellent *Landstalker* on the Mega Drive and *Dark Savior* on the Saturn) and *Breath of Fire 3*, from Capcom and one of the things they have in common is that they're both excellent at what they do.

For once I'm pleased to see a game without too many frills. *Breath of Fire 3* is, without a doubt, your traditional Japanese RPG. Set in a 3D isometric world (much like Konami's *Vandal Heart*), you wander around, investigate villages and engage the villagers in a bizarre form of broken English, you leap up to new levels of skill every so often (rewarding you with a baffling array of increased statistics and the odd new spell), there are also plenty of magical effects and spells to collect, monsters to kill and puzzles to solve. *Breath of Fire 3* has no pretentions. It doesn't claim to try anything new and you've certainly seen it all before. What it does, though, is give you it all again, wrapped up in an engaging storyline with a massive amount of gameplay area to cover.

The one reason why you can forgive this game for being so unoriginal in design is that RPGs are one of the only genres where the storyline is the most important part of the game. Sure, you can fudge your way through a game engine and throw in the odd cartoony, anime-style graphic but it's the storyline that'll keep you glued to the game. That and clever puzzle design slowly leads you, intuitively, into the gameplay, without getting you completely stuck on the first stage you come to.

The storyline is too vast to fit into a summary but the result of the lengthy intro is that you're left in the care of two petty thieves, Rei and Teepo. They steal you some armour and decide that you'll prove helpful to them as an apprentice thief and an extra pair of hands. All this would probably be fine if it wasn't for the fact that you *aren't*

No, frankly, I don't know what you mean but I'll happily go in with you... just for the purposes of research.

You'll need to get some money together to bribe your way in here. There's no other way.

Most of the enemies you'll encounter have spells of their own and a lot of them are pretty varied.

Queensbury rules

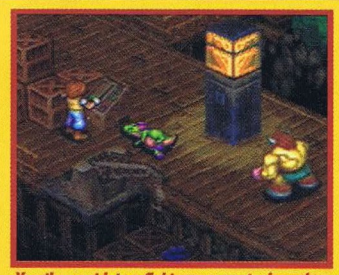
Battles in RPGs can easily confuse the novice. The mere mention of various constitution-related skill levels can have all but the bravest rushing for cover. Thankfully, though, the system in place in Breath Of Fire 3 *is easy to follow and not as niggly as some of its rivals.*

Christ, will you stop moaning. You've got a job, haven't you?

With the main icons in the middle of the screen you can choose any number of attacking-style options.

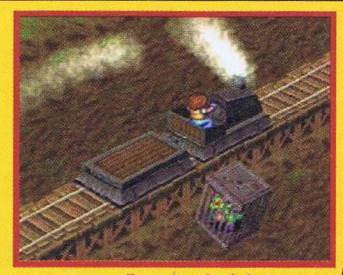
Nina is one character you want to build up as she's got some very powerful spells.

You can't really see this spell but trust me, it looks fantastic when you get it working and it's powerful too.



You then get into a fight you cannot win and, after a futile struggle you...

... are carted off to this train. What plans they have for you are completely immaterial as...



... you can easily escape simply by quickly pressing left and right.

Eye Goo and Man Trap verses two young child-like humans. Ah, but we have swords.

As the game progresses, the spells get more and more intricate.

Considering the size of him and the size of you, that's hardly surprising.

What's that Tonto? Young Jimmy Baker's trapped down a well and his Ma's just gone into labour? Jeez, we need help...

human at all. In fact you're a dragon, currently sporting a human form. This won't last forever though and you can expect to get 'dragoned up' at different stages in the game.

You start the game with very few possessions and no knowledge of what to do and so, through exploration, conversation with the locals and the increasingly frequent and irritating battles, your strength, game level and knowledge all increase.

There are a couple of niggling faults that I, personally, found quite irksome. One was the fact that I seemed to spend more time than I cared simply wandering around vaguely looking for a particular house, person, road, etc. It didn't get to the point where boredom completely took over but, with battles occurring every ten yards, it did get slightly tiresome. Some more clues to the locations of helpful objects might've helped some.

The battles (as is often the case in RPGs) are more of an irritation than a pleasing break. You tend to end up quickly pressing the buttons to flick through the battles as quickly as possible, rather than try to actually plan any serious tactics. This is a crying shame and I just wish that more people might put a little bit more thought into how they're created.

Lastly, and it's more of a pathetic little niggle really, is the music. It's dreadful and has no bearing on the game whatsoever. The CD contains various tunes written by what I can only assume is a gaggle of tone-deaf monkeys on cheap white cider. Sadly there's no option to turn it off but, like I said, it's more of a personal niggle than a serious fault.

Breath of Fire 3 cannot really fail. It tries very little new but what's here is completely reminiscent of every classic RPG from the SNES forward. The storyline's gripping, the puzzles well thought out and the game's big enough to challenge every fan of the genre which, at the end of the day, is all that really matters.

Dean Mortlock

Talking turkey

Somewhere along the line, the translation between Japanese and English took a bit of a turn for the worse. Not that that's a bad thing, though, it's completely hilarious. Not only that, though, but the game also gives you the opportunity to discover for yourself the bizarre Japanese sense of humour.

"Moo"? But what about the quest? What about the game? "Moo"? Git.

Well, wouldn't you if you saw a small green threatening dragon?

Considering the style, the game's options and depth are pretty impressive.

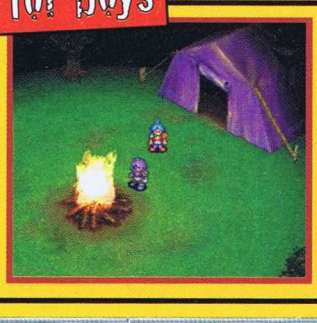
So you did and, judging from the lack of ANYTHING, aren't you glad you bothered?

Threatening dialogue was never a strong point of the undead... no brain, see?

They've just stolen some armour from that shop which is neither big nor clever. try not to do this at home now won't you?

Scouting for boys

To save the game, check out your current levels or just top up your energy, it's a good idea to camp up every now and again. Nice tent, wouldn't you agree?



Camping is excellent for many things, as listed above.

BREATH OF FIRE 3

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Infogrames
PRICE	£39.99
AVAILABLE	July

GRAPHICS 80
Simple, uncluttered and pleasantly functional, although some spells are a bit spectacular.

SOUNDS 45
Utterly revolting noise created by people without ears, taste or regard for human safety.

GAMEPLAY 86
Excellent to get into with a perfect learning curve. It sucks you in when you're not looking.

LIFESPAN 85
The playing area is vast and in common with most RPGs, if you're a fan, it'll last and last.

OVERALL 85

JUDGEMENT *A highly competent, no frills RPG. Seriously recommended for fans of FF7.*

SENTINEL RETURNS

Save games and start in this thin screen.

Ambient and moody, or just dark?

That's your old robot, stuck down a hole.

Absorbing stuff...

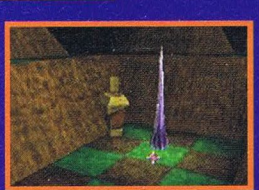
Here's a quick guide to playing Sentinel Returns. It's easier to show the pics than it is to explain!

Place a robot on a boulder and transport into it. You automatically look back towards the old shell.

Move up onto another level. That's your previous robot down in the valley.

Time for a look round. Ah – there's a Sentry with the Sentinel up on the right. Very, moody don't you think?

Move up to a higher level. Time to soak up a tree or two for some extra energy. Is that moody or just dark?



And here's the first Sentry. Absorb it and move on before you get yourself scanned. It's all go isn't it?

Aha! There's the second Sentry. Place your cursor at his base square and absorb away, my robot friend.

Sneak up on the Sentinel when its back is turned so he won't scan you. They only move slowly which is handy.

Place a couple of boulders next to it, transport up and there's the top of his pedestal. Level completed!

The aged 8-Bit classic gets gains another 24-Bits and a new colour scheme – but in these days of Tekken 3 and Gran Turismo, is it enough?

Geoff Crammond's Sentinel first appeared on the Commodore 64 more than ten years ago and blew 8-Bit gamers away. It was 3D, man, and really tense. It was slow and used about eight colours, but we loved it all the same.

Then it made the 16-Bit upgrade to the Amiga and ST. It ran faster and we could use a mouse, so it was easier, but we loved it all the same.

And now... well, they've gone and jazzed it up. It's all texture-mapped. With spooky lighting. And a weird menu screen. And a pointless FMV intro. And super-slow loading. Sigh...

Sentinel Returns is one of those un-pigeonhole-able games: innovative and genre-free; a true classic – nay – legend. You play a robot whose sole aim in life is to rise higher – literally. Each of the game's geodesic landscapes is guarded by a Sentinel (plus, later on, a number of Sentries) and you have to despatch the aforementioned guardians before hyperspacing to (all together now!) the next, more difficult level. To do this you have to be physically higher than them, so you can place your cursor at their base and 'absorb' them.

You jaunt around the landscape by creating alter-ego robots and then transporting between them. You can plonk a robot down where you like, but it's better to create a couple of boulders first and then put him on top of these. This increases your height and also allows you access to higher plateaus in the landscape.

Every time you create a robot or a boulder, you use energy, which can be replenished by absorbing the robot shell and boulders left behind, and also by absorbing the trees (at least that's what they're supposed to look like) that litter the land. However, if you're spotted by one of the slowly-turning Sentinels, it'll start draining your energy, so you have to move, swift-like, or hyperspace to another, lower location. When you've absorbed the final Sentinel, you can hyperspace the hell outta there.

As with many 'classic' games, today's designers have an overwhelming desire to spruce things up, and with *Sentinel Returns*, these changes aren't always for the best. The moody, atmospheric lighting simply means you can't see what the hell is going on most of the time, and the swirling backdrops add little to this disappointing experience.

Sentinel Returns is still the cracking game it always was. It's addictive, thought provoking and exciting – but in these days of fast-paced arcade titles, it just looks slow and lifeless. And, if anything, the thoughtless changes wrought on this sequel have just made matters worse. What used to be a thought-provoking and challenging puzzle adventure game combination is now just a dull old puzzler that leaves you wondering just why you bothered trying to bring the old classic back to life.

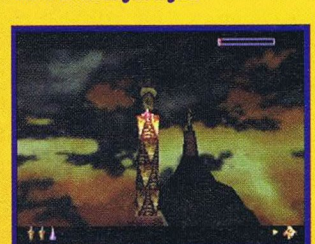
Steve Jarrett

Your old robot cast-off. When you put the cursor on anything it begins to glow, signifying that it's been selected. Calm down.

Here I'm about to absorb a tree. Sorry but this is as exciting as it gets.

Sentinel, trees, clouds, landscape... you kind of get the idea, yes?

A tree. Well, more of a blue pointy stick than a tree.



That's me up on a big pile of boulders...

... and the view from that same location.

AVAILABLE ON PC, PlayStation (VERSION TESTED)

DID YOU KNOW

Sentinel was the name of Arthur C. Clarke's short story that the Stanley Kubrick film 2001: A Space Odyssey was based on.

SENTINEL RETURNS	
VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Psygnosis
PRICE	£39.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS 51 – Plain but pretty – though the unnecessarily gloomy scenery hampers your progress.

SOUNDS 68 – Dark, foreboding background music and a '90s remix of the original FX.

GAMEPLAY 71 – Tense, strategic and addictive – nevertheless it will leave many gamers cold.

LIFESPAN 46 – The game simply gets harder and harder and the novelty soon wears water thin.

OVERALL 65

JUDGEMENT Oh, for a two-player mode, or some clever new twist. A flawed classic by today's high standards.

Does this remind you of *V-Rally* at all? Thankfully, the car handling is more forgiving.

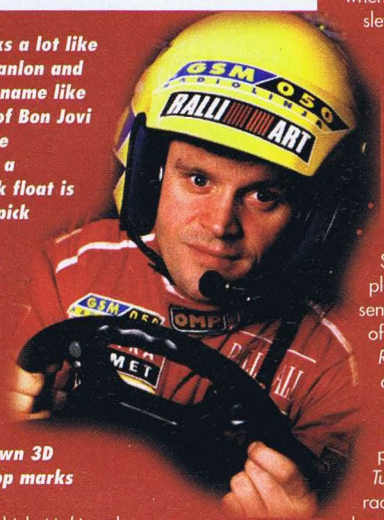
The level of detail in the split-screen is surprisingly high. And it's tons of fun too.

This Ford drives like a dream, but the weaker brakes can lead to some unexpected spills.

Coming top of the league isn't as difficult as it might appear for an experienced driver.

TOMMI MAKINEN RALLY

Rally games are storming the PlayStation but will Makinen be first past the posts?



Tommi looks a lot like Ardal O'Hanlon and spells his name like somebody out of Bon Jovi – but even more appealing than a bombed-up milk float is this very easy pick up and play Rally simulator from the World Champion which boasts over 130 different tracks as well a create your own 3D track editor. (Top marks to Europress.)

One thing which *Makinen* has over fellow rally contender *McRae* is the fact that you race against a team of alternative cars which all play dirty to get to the finishing line first. There are other more subtle differences though, which, depending on what kind racing game you prefer might swing your preference. You might like the arcadey simplicity of the car's handling, which lets you scream ahead of the pack with startling regularity, giving a very competitive feel to the racing. You might like the various racing perspectives which pay an obvious debt to *V-Rally*, albeit in slightly lower resolution. And unlike its older mud brother the cars in *Makinen* don't end up on their roofs every five seconds, which is a real bonus – the downside is that when you do eventually come a cropper, your car will slew unrealistically on its side virtually every time.

If you're interested in racing realism we advise you to give *Tommi* a wide berth. It's a lot of fun to load up the game and be presented with such a bewildering range of tracks, surfaces and weather conditions, but after a couple of hours racing, *Makinen* begins to experience engine trouble on a few major points.

Firstly, the cars handle so easily, there's precious little in the way of a learning curve. Secondly, unless you're going full-out in the two-player mode with a mate, there's not much of a sense of purpose. Now, a lot of gamers went nuts for *Rage Racer* and the like and they're sure to be pleased with the easy pick up and play physics. The problem is that *Gran Turismo* has redefined the racing genre to a certain degree and without a sense of realism to the driving experience *Tommi Makinen* suffers as a result and in comparison feels a little lifeless. It's great fun in the short term (like *Rage Racer*), but if you're palms go all moist at the likes of *Gran Turismo* and *Sega Rally*, we'd have to say steer clear.

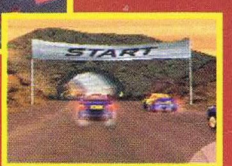
Iain White

Touch my engine

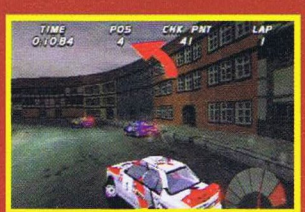
You can go mental tuning-up your chosen motor for further fender-bending encounters with the illusive Mr Makinen. Here are a selection of the fine vehicles on offer.

The world's your dust bowl in the main option screen.

Makinen's tunnel sections are well impressive, but tricky to squeeze through.



Tight bends on cobbled streets shocker.

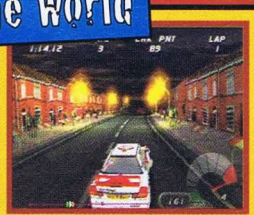


Impressive power-slides are easy.

You'll slew all over the place on the sand.

All around the world

There's a massively impressive 130 tracks in Tommi Makinen Rally, *which isn't a bad effort really. See if you can spot the deliberate nod to the Sweden stage in* V-Rally.

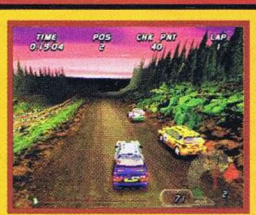


England boasts plenty of bollards.

Alaska's track is icy and twisty.

Germany has cobbled streets.

The surfaces are enormously varied



... and the driving differs on 'em all.

TOMMI MAKINEN RALLY

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1 or 2
FROM	Europress
PRICE	£39.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS 74
Low-res and a bit on the grainy side. The colours and textures are pleasant enough.

SOUNDS 70
Fine but not remarkable in any way. The music for the main screen is face-clawingly irritating.

GAMEPLAY 75
Fast and furious but largely unaddictive. Cars stay on the road better than in V-Rally.

LIFESPAN 80
With this number of tracks and your own track editor, you could be at it for years.

OVERALL 77

JUDGEMENT *If you're after an easy pick-up and play rally-sim, this is your man. If realism's your bag, go for Colin McRae instead.*

AVAILABLE ON PC PlayStation

VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Europress should have expected a real sit with this, Makinen's top fun in the short-term, but lacks a real challenge and sense of addiction.

AVAILABLE ON PC

VERSION TESTED

PlayStation

DID YOU KNOW

Mech Commander's world is full of RPGs, board and card games, books and comics. Check out the Net on... www.fasa.com

The battle seems to be going great, everyone's fighting and having a lovely time.

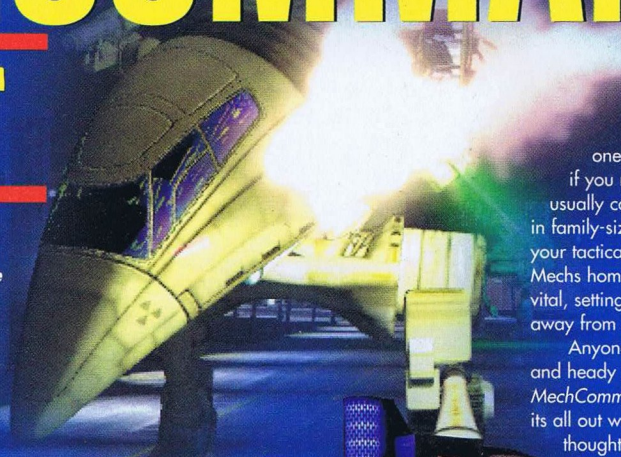
The best way to get a Mech is to kick 'im when he's down. Then keep kicking till he lies still.

It's all getting a bit tricky now. All yer mates have ejected, best call in a last-ditch airstrike.

"Boom, boom" goes the Mech, "Splut, splut" go the victims. At least the fleshy innards do.

MECHCOMMANDER

Feeling heavy metal? Then shake your head at the mech-a-bods...



Yes, it's the game of battling 'bots. You see humans in the 30th Century are dressing smart for combat, wearing the very latest in 30-foot metal moon-suits, and packing more firepower than the average South Bronx playground.

Unlike previous robot games like *MechWarrior*, *this game* sticks you in charge of a whole platoon of the steel beasts, from a *C&C: Red Alert* type perspective. Which means diddy 'bots and lots of chin-rubbing, brain-ache action 'cos this is a realtime strategy game that expects you to out-think as well as out-fight the enemy. You can't jump straight into the scrap either as you've got to customise your Mech force for each mission.

You start with the biggest hunks of junk going, armed with little more than bad language. For every mission you get through, you'll be paid in hard cash. You can blow that on bigger and better Mechs, harder and nastier weapons and leaner, meaner pilots to cope with the tough-as-iron-boots missions to come. For instance, you could shell out on a fast, light Mech with long-range radar and sensor jammers to scout enemy positions for weaknesses. Or, get a big bruiser with loads of armour who can duel enemy Mechs up close. Either way, you'll spend a lot of time between fights tinkering with your platoon, pick 'n' mixing your heavy metal depending on whether you've got to vandalise a base, defend an installation, rescue friendly forces or nip out to the all-night garage for a Topic.

Whatever happens you've got to be Victor Mature as this is no *C&C* tank-rush game. You'll get your hands on a maximum of 12 Mechs. Each one is vital and replacing them is expensive, so if you make a mistake the 'replay mission' button usually comes in handy. And mistakes usually come in family-sized batches as you have to think hard about your tactical approach if you're going to bring your Mechs home safely. Positioning your Mechs correctly is vital, setting up ambushes is good, and often you'll run away from a fight to look for an easier way through.

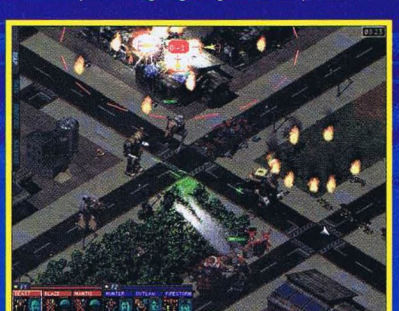
Anyone who gets off on the fast-paced thrustings and heady firefights of *Red Alert* or *TA* will find *MechCommander* a bit too slow and overweight but if its all out war you want with cunning tactics and thought-provoking missions, then this is your baby.

Les Ellis

Full metal cabinet

There are Virtual Reality centres all over America, kitted out with Mech cockpits, that let you experience the 'I'm 30 feet tall, made of metal, and got guns sticking out of every orifice' thrill for yourself.

There's only one way out of this. Get on your knees and pray, boy.

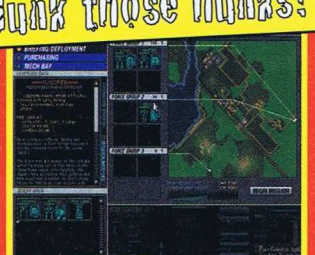


Car parking? No problem!

Mechs, giant metal mincers that are great in a fight. Until they meet bigger Mechs.

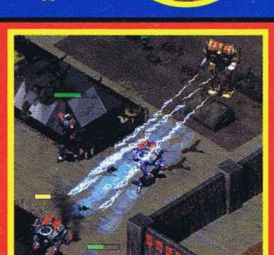
The Catapult Mech, he's crude but he's effective. Try blowing his head off first.

Junk those hunks!



Each mission kicks off with a lovely briefing. Fun packed and fact-filled, it tells you exactly 'what and where' and usually throws in some juicy 'how' tips too. You'll need 'em.

Then it's time for a quick tinker in the Mech shop. Pay yer dosh and slap on some brutal weapons, klunk klick the tastiest pilots, panel beat any shunted suits and chuck 'em at the enemy. Raaar!



Time to die. Thirty feet robots can't hide, so get on with it. Standard procedure is to scout enemy bases with a fast Mech, crash through a weak spot with heavy Mechs, then blow objectives with guns and run for the extraction point like you haven't paid the bill in Pizza Hut.

MECH COMMANDER	
VERSION REVIEWED	PC
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Microprose/FASA
PRICE	£40
AVAILABLE	TBC

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Small but intricately detailed. You can zoom in for a closer look at the action as well. **86**	The blasting and explosions are as noisy as you'd expect. Not the best, but not the worst. **70**	More strategy-based than the likes of Red Alert but once you're in, you'll be hooked. **90**	Rock hard missions and a lot to play around with between them. Multi-player as well. **90**	**90**

JUDGEMENT Slow burning, strategic slug-fest - for lovers of brain violence everywhere .

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HOT FROM E3

BATMAN&ROBIN

AVAILABLE ON

PC

PlayStation

VERSION TESTED

MD

SN

DID YOU KNOW

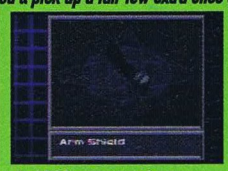
Acclaim make the best Batman game yet, that looks and feels like you've stepped into the film but it's difficult and demanding stuff.

Holy Bat-utility belt!

Well, you're not about to go up against Gotham City's nastiest perps empty handed. That would be unfair. By pressing pause on the joypad you can gaily scroll through a futuristic range of default weapons and some right nifty bat-gadgets too. While wandering around the cave and mansion you'll pick up a fair few extra ones too. But where's the all-important Shark repellent?

Levitate with grace using this neat little number.

Make the villains weep into their beer with da Batgas.



It shields your arm from harm. Useful at home too.

If any of the creeps lets off a nasty fart you'll need this.

The health meter keeps an eye on your damage status.

Cool and deadly, this might just save your bacon.

Gotham's dark knight whips on his cape and lets rip in a rather impressive but super tough Tomb Raider-style adventure. KA-POWW!!

All the previous Batman games have been about as amusing as a car crash. So it's with suspicion, fear and well... loathing that we approach Acclaim's brave attempt at doing something different (and hopefully, witty and fun) with the Batman licence.

The good news to kick off with then, is that Batman, Robin and Batgirl (if you fancy) find themselves waist-deep in a frankly ENORMOUS *Tomb Raider* adventure/beat/puzzle-em-up which follows the plot of last summer's blockbuster very closely indeed.

More good news is the fact that the game looks absolutely gorgeous with top marks going to the Batcave (more of which in a minute), Wayne Manor and the dark and seedy streets of Gotham Central – your stamping ground for clues to the future criminal plans of Poison Ivy and Mister Freeze. Got all that? Good, let's continue then.

Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to decipher clues, some of which are left in the Batcomputer via e-mail (nice touch), some beaten out of street punks (a succession of weak-as-water brawlers) and a lot of which are found casually littering the fringes of crime scenes dotted about the dark and brooding cityscape like spent shotgun cartridges.

The storyline takes place over three days in the life of the batkids, and each crime unfolds in realtime from the moment you first step up to the Batcomputer to check out your latest e-mail and examine your starting clues. Sounds tricky? You bet your leather trousers it's tricky. But once you've mastered the basic fighting skills, thanks to the holographic fight simulators in both the cave and mansion, decided on which crusader you're going to be for the evening (childhood wish fulfilment ahoy) then it's straight into the waiting turbo-charged, armour-plated Batmobile or onto the Batcycle. After a short rampage through the streets to the next predicted crime scene, stopping for clues (and a newspaper, if you fancy it) along the way.

Clues, as mentioned before, can appear in many guises, but generally take the form of rotating yellow question marks, which are all best examined and then it's a quick short-cut to the Batcave through a convenient waterfall to see what latest useful morsel you've stumbled upon.

The clock too can be advanced, if you wish, but this generally results in clues being missed and the baddies getting their way as you bite the batdust. Holy brainache! Too many things to think about at once

"If you mention my cellulite, I'm gonna have to hurt you." Mr Freeze doing his best to break the villain stereotype in a Neon brazier. Bless 'im.

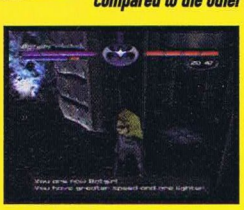
Bat-dude's got to nip through the Park (and some serious fog effects – nice one) to come out (oops) at the museum.

A radar keeps you hip to where you're at as it's easy to get lost in the sprawling neon cityscapes and winding underground tunnels.

A sexchange! Moi?

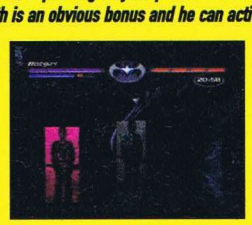
Hours of endless fun can be had morphing into Batgirl or Robin, depending on your preference or whether you went to Boarding School or not. Batman's a bit of a bloater compared to the other two, but while not as agile his strength is an obvious bonus and he can activate switches in the floor with his weight. Which is a bit of a plus.

I want to be BATGIRL!! Step this way to avoid all that silly surgery.

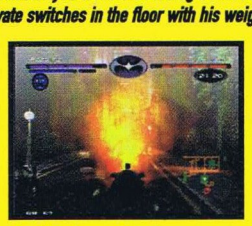


Not only is she more attractive, but lighter and faster too. Hurrah.

Some target practice for the young minx first we think.



You can even get inside her head for this first person perspective.



Boy Wonder gets to sit on a massive throbbing engine. Happy.

Robin emerges a bit ruffled. "Where's me moisturiser, then?"

Welcome to the Batcave!

One of the best bits of the early game is spent exploring the deeper recesses of the Batcave. It's dark. It's very spooky and it's packed with power-ups, fighting ranges, holographic goons and sex-change chambers. Don't say you haven't been warned.

The BATBIKE'S a real rude beast of a hog that goes and handles like dear Satan himself.

"Excuse me, dear lady, do you have a clue?" "The S&M club's over there pal."

Bruce. You're not joking, young boy-wonder.

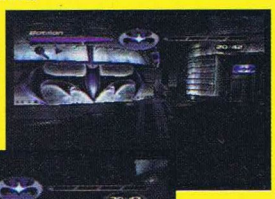
Along the way you can wander round the mansion and take Batgirl for a spot of swimming, while marvelling at yet another host of top camera angles. Or, if you so desire, use what little intuition is required to guess from two halves of a city map/flyer/and newspaper that Freeze is set to steal a diamond from the museum tonight, 20 minutes after closing. Next, grab all the power-ups you can find in the cave (the gun, Batarangs and jetpack boots are really cool) set the navigational controls of the car from the Batcomputer and then leap aboard your respective vehicle. Robin and Batgirl get motorbikes while Bruce gets the car, he is the man of the house after all. Then you skid and slide your way to the Museum.

Batman & Robin gets full marks for design. There's an enormous 'WOW' factor that hits you the first time you spark up the game and the epic, clashing, cinematic music that explodes in the background is enough to make anyone feel heroic. There's plenty to do, each superhero has different attributes which can alter the gameplay massively (for example Batgirl's immune to Poison Ivy's lovedust) and it's easy to swap between the three at any point during the game.

The thing about *Batman & Robin* is this: the player's given so much to do from the off, even though the computer prods and prompts you with messages like, "There is a secret hidden beside you." This really does help. Without this assistance it'd be far too easy to buckle under the weight of the challenge. It looks and sounds fantastic but the difficulty curve is much too steep for the average gamer. If you're a *Tomb Raider* or *Deathtrap Dungeon* fanatic though, you'll probably think you've died and gone straight to heaven. Home Alfred.

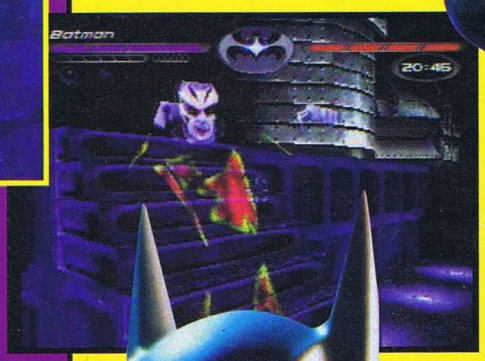
Iain White

This is my cave and here's my computer. Shall we play Space Invaders? Maybe Doctors & Nurses?

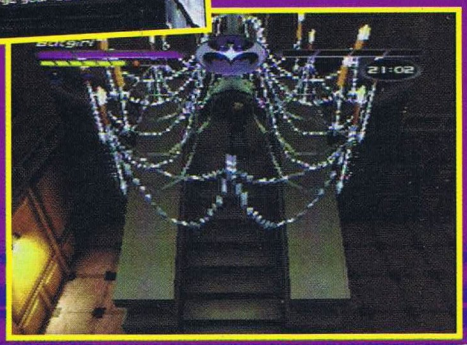


Go for a Power Shower to get a total tune up.

If you explore the mansion there's an amazing swimming pool to get your rubber nice and wet. Or this weirdo holographic goon to bash about on the right.



The entrance to the main section of Wayne Manor can be accessed through this central painting. You gotta blow it up first, mind.



Swinging on the candelabra can provide hours of endless fun. It doesn't really do anything but is worth the added effort.

Holy Batcomputer!

When you first stride up to the Batcomputer, there are some e-mails from Alfred your butler, pieces of a map and a flyer for the museum. Don't worry though, the computer helps you along at this early stage by giving you large nods and winks in the right direction. Thank Christ.

BATMAN & ROBIN

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Acclaim
PRICE	£39.99
AVAILABLE	July

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Stunning 3D perspective and the holograms, weapons, vehicles and goons are fantastic too. **85**	Orchestral movie soundtrack that adds more than a shot of menace to proceedings. **82**	Very involving, in a Tomb Raider-type way, but the difficulty curve is way too steep. **69**	If patience is your virtue and you love this caped-crusader then you'll be playing this for ages. **75**	**74**

JUDGEMENT *Bursting at the bat-seams with puzzles, violence and exploration, this looks and sounds fantastic. It's a real tough cookie, though.*

AVAILABLE ON

PC

VERSION PlayStation TESTED

MD

N

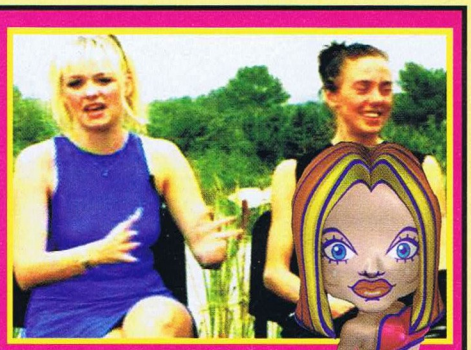
DID YOU KNOW

If you really want some music based gaming you'd be much better off getting Parappa the Rapper or Bust-A-Groove.

Ginger spice strikes another talentless pose.

Interview too!

What was formerly mooted to be part of the interactive experience now feels like a tacked-on second thought. A 15-minute program about the Spice Girls, where they answer questions interspersed with tiny movie and live clips is on board too. Not bad, but will you want to watch it twice?



Stupid Interviews

SPICEWORLD

Look! Now there're only three. Wishful thinking or a hint to the future.

Shoulders back Baby! Time to get into the groove with this fella… he's the King of the Dancefloor

One down, four to go. Cross those fingers and toes.

Posh! Sporty! Ginger! Baby! Fat! Ugly! Stupid! Off! Off! Off! Forgetting the obvious and inevitable hatred for the subject matter for a moment, we assumed that there might be at least some splash of fun to be found here.

At least some golden nugget to be mined from this black-toothed Queen Mother of a game – sorry, interactive music magazine. We were wrong.

Here's what happens. You select your 'favourite' Spicer, then you select one of five Spice Girls tracks to tenuously remix. You then arrange nine chunks of the record, choosing which chunk you'd like to follow which. Unfortunately, constructing anything remotely resembling a palatable tune is impossible due to the limited samples on offer. No matter what you do it's going to sound disjointed and odd. And you can't copy, or repeat chains of samples or even delete your errors. And every song must be 18 bars long – no shorter – meaning that you're bored and out of ideas before you've finished.

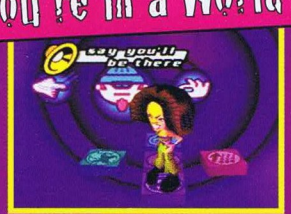
You're then off to the Dance Practice Area, where the eleven dance moves available in the game are displayed while the four button pushes required for each appear from the background, just out of time with the music. That's helpful, isn't it?

The next section sees you dancing with the rest of the girls and you must remember the dance moves from the Practice area. No mean feat, especially for sub-teenagers. Tap in a four button 'code' and Ms Spice does the move. You then must choose a different girl and do the same thing again. We can see how it might be fun to concoct dances for each girl, her copying the others before going into a flurry of solo activity, but the lack of any edit options would make programming such activity a nightmarish chore rather than a fun. Again, young Spice fans – *Spice World*'s target audience – will find this bit boring, frustrating and difficult.

The final stage has the formerly famous five doing their routine while you enjoy limited control of the camera. You can zoom in and out, and flick between various left and right, close and distant cameras. The final result being the Spice Girls dancing to 'your' song, doing 'your' moves and watched via a camera 'you' positioned. The problem is that none of this is either satisfying or any fun whatsoever. GamesMaster says 'No.' Get *Bust-A-Groove* instead.

Dan Griffiths

You're in a World of Spice!



First you pick your tune. Choose from Wannabe, Say You'll Be There, Who Do You Think You Are?, Spice Up Your Life and Pepsi abomination Move Over.

Next you leap around the samples – trying to remember which was which – choosing each in turn to build up your own Spicey mix. It'll sound crap.

Now this dude shows you the moves in a ten-year-old-girls' version of PaRappa. Write them all down as you won't see them in the next stage.

You finally get to dance with the girls! Do your moves then change girls and have them do your bidding. Repeat until all five are frugging like crazy.

Control the camera in the TV studio, record its moves then sit back and watch, saying 'I did that,' before putting Gran Turismo back on.

SPICE WORLD	
VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	SCEE
PRICE	£20
AVAILABLE	Out now

GRAPHICS 73
The chunky, super deformed Spicers move smoothly enough but look ridiculous.

SOUNDS 44
Five cut-down, lobotomised versions of five 'already crap' Spice Girls tunes.

GAMEPLAY 10
Next to nothing here because this is not a game in any shape or form. Bollards!

LIFESPAN 12
Little sis' will watch the video bit, have a stab at the rest and then sling it in the bin.

OVERALL 43

JUDGEMENT Yes, it's for little girls, but no, it's still not any good. A total balls up.

GAME BOY™ PROTECTING THE PLANET FROM BOREDOM

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AVAILABLE ON

VERSION PlayStation TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Although Viper looks like G-Police it most definitely isn't. If you're after real chopper action, check out G-Police instead.

VIPER

Coiled like a rusty spring ready to strike, GM found Viper had lost its fangs and run out of juice as well...

Choppers are cool, as is blowing up stuff, so put the two things together and you're bound to get entertainment. Yet somehow Viper's creators have managed to put in the explosions, the effects, the big things that need blasting, and forgotten to include any sort of gameplay to back it up.

At first everything seems fine (if murky) as you head into this futuristic shoot-em-up to do battle with UFOs, pedestrians and even trains. As soon as you get into the city proper, though, the problems start. You can't seem to evade incoming fire as you're channelled towards each target. The airspace begins to get very crowded and you're offered several forking paths that are just blind alleys. Yet, ridiculously, you can't fly up out of trouble or, even dafter, stop moving forwards and hover on the spot! This is a HELICOPTER, you're supposed to be able to hover in the bleedin' thing! Instead you end up getting trapped between buildings, or even worse trying to get through a gap you can see but that the game refuses to acknowledge is there. Why on earth would anyone make a game like this, a shoot-em-up that pretends to be free-form but turns out to be on rails? *Viper*'s past history explains all.

A couple of years ago Ocean produced a decent shoot-em-up called *Tunnel B1*. As the title suggests it was a subterranean affair full of rock-lined corridors and pyrotechnic effects. Much delayed, *Viper* was developed using a version of the *Tunnel B1* game engine – so what do you get? A game full of invisible tunnels, air corridors that you keep slamming into. Rise above that bridge? Oh no, although there's room you can't. Turn away from that building? Sorry, you're just going to have to crash. What was forgivable in the ground-based *Tunnel* gets very annoying in *Viper*.

Playing *Viper* is rather like receiving a swift kick in the 'nads. First, utter agony, then excruciating pain and finally a dull throbbing sensation. You'll be so relieved to get off the first level that level two might seem mildly enjoyable by comparison, but it still holds all the charm of root canal work. Shoot-em-ups aren't clever or particularly deep so one thing they have to be is fun, and *Viper* just isn't.

Pete Wilton

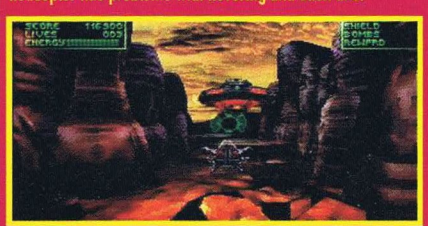
The effects are big and blocky. Not as polished as you might expect.

X-File: No 268/5A

Hello, my name's agent Mulder and I investigate strange phenomena without once managing to collect any evidence backing up my bizarre theories. Several people reported sighting a large saucer type boss in the game Viper, my partner and I went to Michigan to buy a copy. During play we appeared to have lost several minutes, later recalling repetitive shooting of the craft's soft underbelly. We realise now it must be part of a government conspiracy, no boss dies that easy.

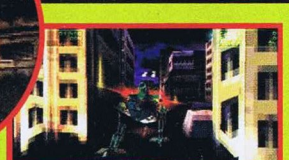
Did you see a strange light in the sky? If you did make sure you call Roswell 55-55 and we'll deny all knowledge.

These killer beams get in the way, especially when your helicopter has problems with hovering and such like.



Quick, follow that saucer! He's a big boss but he's out of shape as we go on to prove in the shot below this one.

A quick blast of his flashing nether regions leaves him struggling for altitude and spewing smoke. Hurrah!

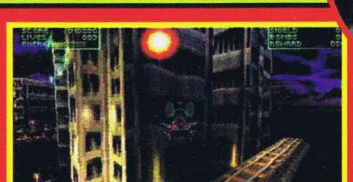


Flying up out of trouble isn't really an option as your chopper has a very limited altitude. This gets frustrating.

No go areas!

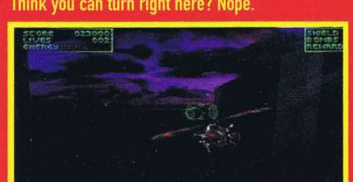
Playing Viper wouldn't be such a frustrating experience if there weren't invisible walls everywhere that stop you going where, visually, there's a gap. What's the point in giving you any control at all if all it allows you to do is bump into stuff? Truth is, it would be much better if your route was totally predetermined.

Mind the gap – it's actually a wall.

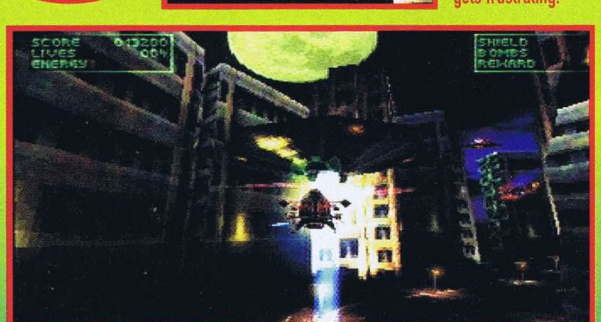


Think you can turn right here? Nope.

Fly me to the moon. LOOK, I CAN'T!



Darkness falls and you're stuffed.



With more of these light beams maybe you could see where you're going.

VIPERS

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Infogrames
PRICE	£40
AVAILABLE	Out now

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Grey to begin with, it soon lightens up with some nice effects but still looks grainy. **79**	Rubbish explosions and dead dull music. No effort made in this department at all. **22**	It's on rails but pretends it isn't. Annoying, frustrating and awkward to control. **37**	Lots to shoot if you can put up with the repetitive action and it gets quite tough. **46**	**43**

JUDGEMENT *What should have been an eye-popping blast-fest ends up rank and unpalatable due to its poor design.*

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AVAILABLE ON

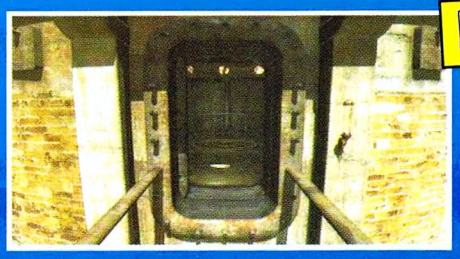
PC

PlayStation

VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Berkley University discovered that the average Riven player is 42, owns his own slippers and finds console stimulating.



RIVEN

Want excitement? Want adventure? You want to turn the page then. Lock up your slippers, it's Riven...

What is it that people like about Myst games? No guns, no cars, no busty heroine, in fact no action at all if you don't count the laborious animations. It must be the pretty pictures then, a selection of holiday snaps from imaginary locations: "Look, this is me in the big gold room, and there I am crossing a bridge to the domed waterworks – doesn't the water look lovely? Isn't the sky blue?"

You can even see how you might get soothed by the sound of waves breaking on the shore or enjoy gazing up at the yellowy moon. This is likely to last all of ten seconds before you get bored because *Riven*, like *Myst*, is a painfully slow game. You know where you want to go, you can see it in the distance, but will *Riven* let you leap ahead? Will it heck. Instead you're left maniacally clicking in frustration as the game advances at its snail's pace, step by picture postcard step. Yawn, are we there yet? Nope.

Saying it's dull is not to say that no work has gone into the game. On the contrary, thousands of man hours have been spent creating its achingly pretty renders. A lot of time has obviously gone into the fantasy storyline too with its Ages, bacterial entities and the arms race between rival technomancers. Unfortunately none of this spills over into that stalwart of the adventure genre – interacting with other characters. You'll get a couple of video clips of the villain, a few villagers running away, but basically *Riven* casts you adrift on a deserted island and expects you to get on with it. While this lends atmosphere in the early stages, later on it exposes the button pushing, lever tugging action to be the trial-and-error, diagram squinting one-dimensional animal it really is. Despite all the window dressing this is a plodding puzzler, not a real adventure at all.

So, surely it's not going to sell that many then. Well if the US PC market is anything to go by (1.1 million and counting) it should shift a few. Then again, how many of us who know the delights of *Fighting Vipers* and *Sega Rally* are really going to be interested in a game with all the addictive hook of a tranquillised sloth? *Riven*, a game even your Grandad wouldn't dare call 'racy.'

Pete Wilton

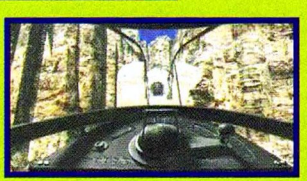
Feel my cable!

The first big moment of excitement is when you call-up the cable car for the first time. A wonderful cut-scene shows your dream machine shimmering in the distance before it hoves into view ready for you to get on. If the whole game was as fast as this roller-coastery ride we'd be a good deal happier and the score would be a good deal higher.

Beginning of the line: Press the button and as if by magic a cable car appears. Top.

You're going to trust your life to this heap of junk. Look, something's moving! Zowie!

Riven at its fastest – pity that this is just a cut-scene you have no control over.



Ho-hum. Within a few seconds you are bored rigid by the ride. Stop! It does.

Annoyingly, it's easy to miss important things like this grey lever because you're never given the freedom to look around properly.

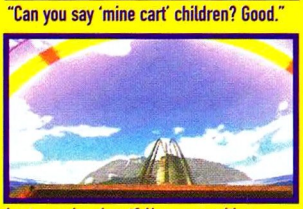
Riven's big attraction are scenic views like this. They soon get a bit samey though.

Eat my cart!

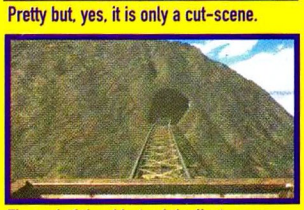
How passe? You thought you'd never get in a mine cart again, didn't you? The thing is when you get to Forest Island, it's the only way to travel around. It's a shame that you don't need to look at anything else on this island, just jump in the cart, pull the lever and go. What a waste of all those rendered scenes.

"Can you say 'mine cart' children? Good."

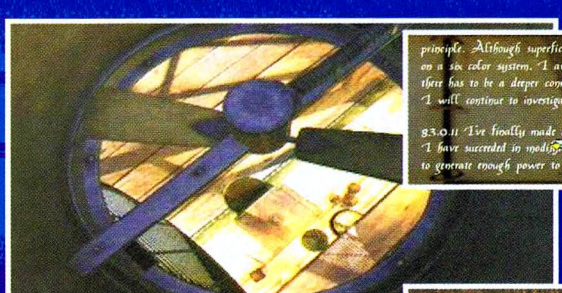
Pretty but, yes, it is only a cut-scene.



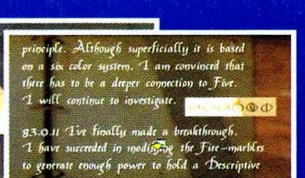
Lost your lunch yet? Nope, us neither.



The end of the ride (and the line), yawn.



If we hadn't blabbed you wouldn't think of climbing into this fan duct. You can't climb anywhere else. Typical.


principle. Although superficially it is based on a six color system. I am convinced that there has to be a deeper connection to Five. I will continue to investigate.
83.0.11 I've finally made a breakthrough. I have succeeded in modifying the Fire-marbles to generate enough power to hold a Descriptive

Read books and learn stuff. Yes!

You see, if you hadn't pulled that lever before this one wouldn't work. Blimey , that's complex gameplay for ya.

RIVEN

VERSION REVIEWED	Saturn
NO. OF PLAYERS	1
FROM	Sega
PRICE	£34.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS 69
Beautiful renders that unfortunately don't go anywhere. It's a video photo album.

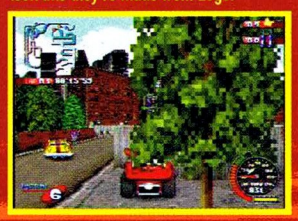
SOUNDS 31
Squeaking pipes, running water, the odd bit of music. Look, they saved the CD for renders.

GAMEPLAY 35
Point and click with little to click on and nowhere worth pointing. It all feels very empty.

LIFESPAN 54
Requires buckets of patience and low expectations but lasts over 100 hours of play.

OVERALL 38

JUDGEMENT *If you're after a video puzzle book then Riven is it. If you want a proper game then look elsewhere.*



Everything gets blocky up close. Trees look like they're made from Lego.

A spinning hour glass reminds you that you've been playing for far too long.

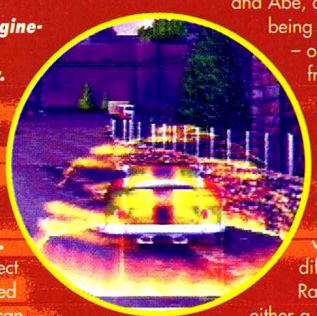
Wreckin' Crew lacks the tracks, the speed, the graphics, the cars and even the point of *Gran Turismo*.

WRECKIN' CREW

How wacky a race is Telstar's Wreckin' Crew? Unfortunately only the most obsessive Dick Dastardly's need apply.

Gran Turismo and its ilk fulfil the engine-based desires of many. But not all. Some prefer a lighter-hearted racer. One riddled with bonkers cars, absurd tracks and oversized weaponry. Micro Machines v3 for example. Or Circuit Breakers. Wreckin' Crew is another such daft driver. Unfortunately this title doesn't sit too well among it's esteemed comrades. Put simply, it's not as much fun.

Yes, this is a racing title. And yes, the object is to come first. However, the game is so bogged down in power-ups, add-ons and extras, you can easily loose sight of this. Rubber is burnt in four distinct locations New York, Sydney, The Mediterranean and, oddly, a theme park. So, for example, in New York you run the risk of ploughing in to fire hydrants, while in the theme park a huge pirate ship ride swings in your path.



So far, so average. The game's 20 tracks are all contained within these worlds. Nothing wrong with that of course. It's just that on the whole the game varies between being too simple (on easy mode) or utter nails (on normal). On the default normal setting even experienced gamers of advanced years will find themselves dripping fire and using rude words.

At the line up you find yourself up against a rum lot. Sir Cuss, an aristocrat with a penchant for animals, IQ, a genetic mutant with a lemon pip brain and Kane and Abe, a pair of Siamese twins, being just three – or perhaps four – of them. You can choose from eight of these grotesques, with a further two hidden characters becoming available with advanced play. Each has their own method of primary and special attack, while their cars also perform differently.

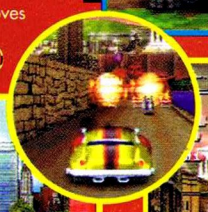
Racing can be viewed from either a first-person in-car position or the common, behind and slightly above perspective. And things move along at quite a rate. No attempt has been made to create a realistic car feel for this arcade-style racer. This is, of course, no bad thing, it's just that your opponents taz away from you at such a pace, hammer you constantly and generally out drive you to such an extent that it all too soon becomes rather tiresome.

Those looking for a wacky race would be wise to take their wide wheels, oil slicks and boxing gloves on springs elsewhere.

Matt Pierce

He's either indicating to turn left, or he's going to shoot someone.

The Anthill Mob never had to use power-ups, so why should you?



Forget go-faster stripes – get your vehicle a big orange shield.

Motor Heads

The vehicles, while looking similarly buggyish, are designed to handle differently. They also have a colourful collection of drivers. Here are the five best.

KID KRANIUM'S car is the fastest, but prone to fall to bits if given a few well timed slaps.

Driven by RETARD IQ, this beast will take a lot of damage but moves like a suicidal snail.

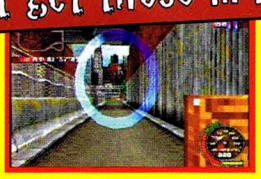
Boffin DR NITROUS has manufactured a car with the fastest acceleration. But it can be erratic.

Siamese fellas KANE AND ABE can attack simultaneously left and right. Handy in a tight spot.

This mobile driven by SIR CUSS is a pretty good all-rounder. It offers the most accurate drive.

You can't get these in Halfords

With 14 different power-ups in the game it can seem rather baffling for the beginner. In order, these are your most vital additions.



TURBO RING. *You'll need to hit these regularly in order to stand a chance of keeping up with the pack.*

REPAIR KIT. *After taking a thorough hammering drive through this spanner to sort out your bodywork.*

NITROS. *More speed. These, used at the right moment can mean the difference between first and er... last.*

SHIELD. *Very handy. This baby will make you invulnerable – for a limited period only.*

MYSTERY PICK-UP. *These can be bad. More often than not, they are good. Go on – take a chance..*

WRECKIN' CREW

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1 or 2
FROM	Telstar
PRICE	£44.99
AVAILABLE	July

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Basic. Colourful, smooth enough, but nothing to really get your pixels in a twist. **61**	Mixture of low rent garage and bargain basement drum and bass. Not Metalheadz. **55**	Either too easy or tough as old trousers. It will make you angry, in a very bad way. **60**	On easy mode you will do the job in no time. On hard? It could become a full time job. **62**	**61**

JUDGEMENT *Yet another disappointing driving/shooting game hidden under a mound of power-ups.*

AVAILABLE ON PC PlayStation VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Colourful cartoon racing appears to be the PlayStation's bag – try Circuit Breakers or Micro Machines V3, rather than this lot.

AVAILABLE ON

VERSION PlayStation TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

There is also a Wargames available for PC but this version is very different from the PS one and focuses much more on strategy.

The big chopper is great for taking out far-off enemy supply depots.

Destroy enemy listening posts and they won't know that you're coming.

WARGAMES

Not a awful '80s film but rather an enjoyable slice of '90s warfare...

Destroying the enemy computer centre is all very well but you could have hacked into the thing first!

However advanced games get, however flash and big and clever, there will always be a place for wanton destruction. What's the point in having stunning city blocks, verdant forests and interesting water features if you can't demolish them in one giant column of flame and debris? It was Return Fire that first showed us that this lust for destruction could be combined with more tactical gameplay.

Wargames keeps the big explosions and hands-on controls but adds a further layer of strategy. There are more complex objectives, more vehicles to choose from and, thanks to a simple range of orders, several of your units in action at once. Just to liven things up still further, during the course of a mission you'll receive e-mails from HQ demanding that you take on secondary targets.

Of course it's the carnage that makes *Wargames* immediately appealing. Finish the first few missions and you'll be given meaty tanks or tin-legged battle machines to wreak havoc across the jungle, snow or urban landscapes. Call in airstrikes on bridges! Take out temples! Torch or squash marauding troops! See it and you can destroy it.

You'll soon discover though that all on the battlefield is not utterly rosy. The default 'over-the-turret' view gets annoying – you want to hunker down and gaze lovingly at explosions in the distance. The PS-controlled vehicles are dumb too, getting stuck on bridges, beaches or failing to retreat under heavy bombardment. Strategically speaking *Wargames* is severely limited as you can't allot tasks to your PS-controlled units and you don't decide which order to take objectives in (do them out of sequence and you'll get court-martialled). Everything's disappointingly linear and *Wargames* lacks that extra 'Build for Victory' angle found in *Command & Conquer* or *Warcraft*. In one-player it can feel like you're bogged down in a war of attrition and no amount of clever tactics or switching of resources is going to result in a quicker, cleaner route to your objectives.

It would be criminal not to acknowledge its deficiencies but *Wargames* is still good, vicious fun. Unlike most action-led titles it does offer a smidge of strategy and an ounce of tactics to the endless shelling, bombing and killing – making for an interesting and enjoyably lethal cocktail.

Pete Wilton

Flare Game

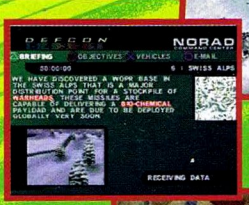
One definite plus is the two-player game which is split into four separate sub-games. The first of these is your basic kill-anything deathmatch, the second is where you have to steal your opponent's 'flare' (Return Fire deja vu) then there's a co-operative two-player (using the one-player missions) and a regenerative deathmatch. The basic deathmatch is definitely the most fun out of these although all the games are hampered by the odd diagonal split-screen and the way that you're never quite sure whose scanner is whose.

The WOPR forces are stronger in this mode, so make sure you pick them if you get the chance.

Blowing up towers is good but stealing flares is what counts.

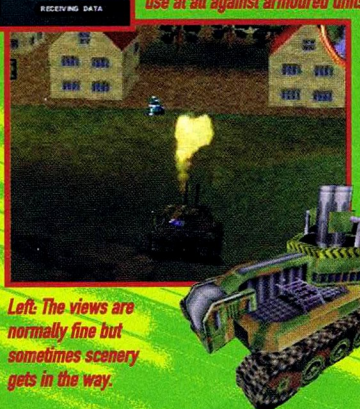
All the scenery is combustible. Anyone got a fire extinguisher?

Destroying enemy bases is all in a day's work for your squad of vehicles. Just torch everything.



Below: The flame-thrower is good for taking out troops but no use at all against armoured units.

Left: Call in an airstrike to take out big bridges like this one.



Left: The views are normally fine but sometimes scenery gets in the way.

Order! Order!

The one feature Wargames *has that both* Return Fire *and* Mass Destruction *lack is the ability to get your PS controlled units involved in the action. A quick press of 'Call All Units' will send them scurrying to your aid. You can also order fresh supplies by 'hacking' into enemy facilities. Also you receive fresh orders throughout your mission in the form of in-game e-mails.*

WARGAMES	
VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1 or 2
FROM	Electronic Arts
PRICE	£40
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS	SOUNDS	GAMEPLAY	LIFESPAN	OVERALL
Good but could do better. Explosions and effects are great but the views are limited. **81**	Not up to the martial standard of Return Fire (but then what is?). Predictable effects. **76**	Could have been deeper but the variety of vehicles and tasks gives it plenty of scope. **84**	15 missions isn't tons but they do get harder and more complex as you progress. **80**	**83**

JUDGEMENT It's hard not to like a game this brutal. Big guns, explosions and even some thought required.

Having no respect for the law many vehicles will open fire on your car as you give chase.

Bizarrely, you've got to 'pacify' some offenders with a special ray while your bosses are quite happy for you to blow-up others.

Mounting surveillance just means keeping the target in view while this camera sight is up to show you're busy recording.

CRIME KILLER

GM Says: If you can't do the time, don't do a criminal game

Yonks ago, worried by the glut of racing games, some bright-ish spark had the idea of bolting guns onto cars and invented the driving-shoot-em-up. Even now, long after the novelty's worn off, the thought of combining violence and speed must have marketing spods frothing at the gills. So they probably up-ended their cappuccinos on hearing that Crime Killer was going to add airborne action to the menu. What a shame they didn't stop to ask whether any of these action elements were actually any good.

There are three vehicles to control... a car, a bike and a wing – you start with the car and work your way up. The missions are made up of a number of tasks, from blowing up parked cars or recording the movements of a suspect to attacking a heavily armed road tank. While the fact that these tasks appear in a different order each time you play adds variety, it makes you feel that the parts of each mission are unconnected. You're directed from one incident to another by a small radar screen and targets that appear on vehicles as they pass. Unfortunately, in practice this often means you're looking at the tiny display rather than at the road because the re-draw is so feeble. 'Vehicle In Range!' your HUD bleats when in fact you can't even see the target car's back bumper.

Driving-wise, the game also has problems. Narrow streets and poor driving on the part of the PS-controlled cars mean that you're in regular shunts no matter how careful you are. Rather than super-fast futuristic freeways *Crime Killer*'s cityscapes are a nightmare of roundabouts and alleys, so not only do you seldom get a decent speed but when chasing an offender there's no room to dodge out of the way of incoming rounds.

The airborne action and two-player mode could have alleviated the repetitive chasing but both are disappointing. The wing handles almost exactly like the other vehicles and barely gets off the ground while in two-player dodgy handling and mediocre effects prevent it from scratching the bodywork of *Vigilante 8* or *Twisted Metal*'s head-to-head. *Crime Killer* is a victim of the old multi-genre trap; it tries to do everything and ends up doing nothing particularly well.

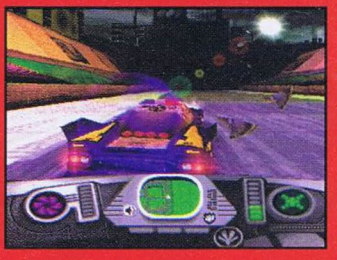
Pete Wilton

The explosions are alright but could be more spectacular.

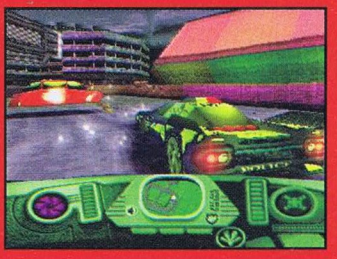
Unlike, say, G-Police the plot screens don't prove intriguing.

Ram Raiders

A major problem with patrolling Crime Killer *'s mean streets is that not only do civilians not respect your police vehicle, but they're also dead keen on smashing it up. Putting your sirens and flashing lights on makes no difference, they follow the same on-rails path whether you're in the way or not. The collision detection is also poor, making your car a good third wider than it appears to be on-screen. You end up taking more damage from stupid or careless civilian drivers than from the tooled-up villains!*



But I was nowhere near him! The poor collisions ensure that you take lots of hits however you drive.



Touch another car and they invariably spin round to block your path. This can get really annoying.

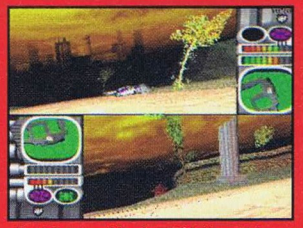
Civilian drivers are really dumb in the tunnel sections. They make no attempt to avoid your car.

Head-to-Headache

The two-player, split-screen mode could have been great but the in-car view makes it a nightmare as any tight turning means you lose sight of the road. While using the wings is quite fun the bikes spin you around blindly.

These 'wings' sort of hover along rather than actually flying about properly.

The wings are easily the most fun out of the three vehicles for a deathmatch.



The bikes are bloody awful. You can't see where the road is half the time.

CRIME KILLER

VERSION REVIEWED	PlayStation
NO. OF PLAYERS	1 or 2
FROM	Interplay
PRICE	£39.99
AVAILABLE	Now

GRAPHICS 76
Decent if rather dull cityscapes are spoilt by poor re-draw on the cars and average effects.

SOUNDS 67
Trying to be techno but failing, it really needs more speech samples to add atmosphere.

GAMEPLAY 69
Repetitive chase and blast without the strategy or structure to make it work.

LIFESPAN 76
Gets much trickier later on and there are plenty of missions if you've got the patience.

OVERALL 73

JUDGEMENT *Competent but predictable drive-by shooter that promises excitement it can't deliver.*

AVAILABLE ON PC PlayStation VERSION TESTED

DID YOU KNOW

Strangely, the most difficult offenders to deal with in Crime Killer are rogue taxi drivers because they can turn on a 5p piece!

What with late night chat shows, meetings at Number Ten with the PM and his continuing high-profile affair with Czech super model Letsgetcha Smallsov, Grip Chimp is getting to be a hard man to track down. Thankfully he still managed to find time in his 1998 celebrity diary to review the latest batch of add-ons...

Cyberstick/ Virtual Reality Joystick

Cyberstuff
Price £00.00
PC
www.cyberstuff.com

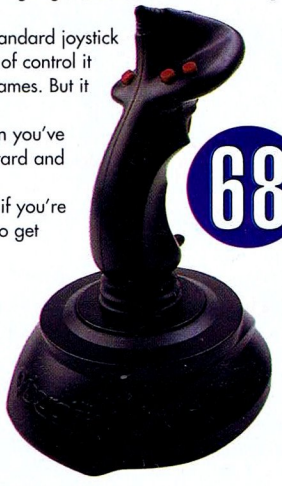
Cyber this cyber that... can't we read anything games-related without tripping over the word cyber? This bit of techno-tat is technically a joystick but with one interesting twist.

It waves goodbye to table-top controller blues. Yes, finally you can shed the joypad base that restricts your game controlling. Instead, seize your detachable stick like a conductor's baton and (hovering a good 20cm above knee height) up the tempo of your game play.

This techno-wand can do everything that a standard joystick can and at any altitude (length of lead permitting). The feeling of control it initially gives you certainly ups the excitement of razor-edged racing games. But it didn't take us long to realise that something was missing.

Not having a base means that you have no resistance to tell you when you've reached your maximum turning angle. It's all too easy to let your arm slip forward and accelerate wildly or twist the wrong way and crash into a wall.

If you're a flight sim freak then this might be a worthwhile purchase. Then again, if you're easily impressed by words like 'cyber', you've probably already rushed out to the shops to get one. There really is no accounting for taste, is there?



68%

PSX Dual Analogue Controller/ joypad

Gamester
Price £19.99
PSX
0800 0183 061

Two choices face those looking for an alternative to the Official PSX Dual Shock controller, this and the Analogue Controller Plus opposite. Unfortunately, this offering from Gamester has an unsatisfactory lightweight feel that makes you think just one gust of air could carry it away like an errant crisp packet.

Unattractive, ugly moulding is this controller's first stumbling block. The buttons lack any kind of solid feel and the digital controls have been turned into a pseudo-analogue disk that'll fool no-one. None of this should matter in an ideal world because the pad performs its task adequately. It's basically a no-frills controller with little aesthetic charm.

59%

PSX Steering Wheel with Rumble Force

Gamester
Price £69.99
PSX
0800 0183 061

For the diehard racing fans this looks set to be the steering wheel of '98. With a new multi-sensitive rumble feature, it's compatible with all PlayStation games.

Gamester have been producing third party accessories for a long time now and it really shows in this add-on. It feels great and the vibrations really add to the excitement of the game.

There are two dials on the base of the wheel which change the sensitivity and power of the vibrations. These come as a welcome extra and make its price tag almost acceptable. But when on full power and sensitivity its tremors become troublesome and it gets to be a bit of a handful.

There are a few problems with its construction too. The pedals wobble under pressure and the suction caps that keep it on table tend to fall out. Ignore the bland silver and grey paintjob and realise that it's got a super-sleek aerodynamic design. On the whole, this is easily the best driving set up available for PlayStation.

92%

GRIP CHIMP

Analogue Controller Plus

Joytech
Price £24.99
PSX
01525 852900

Wow, look at that! fire-engine red! This pad doesn't make game control any easier than its rival on the opposite page, but boy is it red, rouge, rojo...

What gives this pad its chunkier feel are the rumble gubbins hidden deep within its plastic shell. Play any compatible game and you can be sure of a reassuring vibration delivered directly to your clammy palm. The fun doesn't stop there... secreted in the pad's underbelly is a turbo button that can be secretly activated without arousing your opponent's suspicion.

It still doesn't have the refined quality of the official pad and carries the same price tag. But If you're foolishly swayed by a good paint job then this might be for you.

82%

The Glove

Reality Quest
Price £50
PSX

For all it's hi-tech, next millennium, futuristic good looks this is nothing more than an arm-splint for broken gamers.

Strap yourself into the velcro straps and you soon realise that this is a virtual tragedy. Twists of your wrist give you directional control while the other buttons lie under your finger tips. But the buttons are awkwardly placed and the fact that the △ is above the ◉ makes it very difficult to distinguish between the two.

Settle down to a game of *Tekken 3* and you have to flail around like a breakdancing cockerel to pull off those impressive combos. Try any racing game and you realise just how awkward the directional controls are. You soon find yourself retiring from the race with a blown wrist-gasket.

Avoid this shameless twaddle at all costs. It's a geeks gauntlet.

35%

Yesterday

1990: SNES

Today

1994: PlayStation

Tomorrow

1998: Dreamcast

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gamesmaster class

Cruise though the solo game, and become a master of deathmatches. GamesMaster shows you how.

FORSAKEN busted!

Get to grips with Foetoid and the gang, in one of the biggest, toughest, nastiest shoot-em-ups of all time. GamesMaster reveals all the dirty lowdown tactics you'll need to survive.

It's one of the loudest, most spectacular games that you can buy, and it moves like greased lightning. There's no denying that it's a classy shoot-em-up, but it's also a little bit tricky.

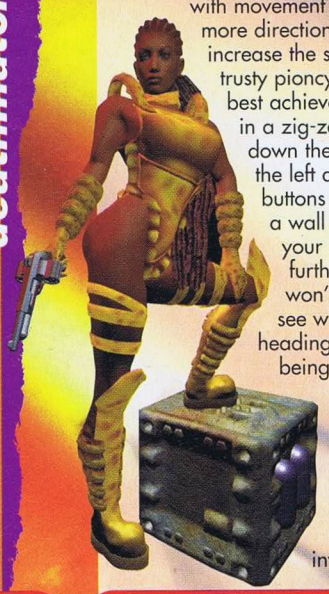
Just navigating the sprawling 3D mazes can be challenging enough, but throw in super-accurate gun turrets, huge bosses, and swarms of mechanised enemies with a taste for blood, and you've got a game that'll tax even the most dedicated players. Which is where we come in, as GamesMaster deigns to bring you our comprehensive guide to surviving life in the dark, foreboding world of... *Forsaken*.

PLAY TO WIN

Mastering *Forsaken*'s basic manoeuvres is by no means simple. There are many different ways to play, and the PC, PlayStation and N64 versions each lend themselves to a slightly different approach. Common to all three is the need to learn the various control quirks and enemy AI, and these tips should help you do just that.

STRAFING FOR SPEED

By combining forward momentum with movement in one or more directions you can increase the speed of your trusty pioncycle. This is best achieved by moving in a zig-zag pattern down the tunnels, using the left and right strafe buttons (strafing into a wall will increase your speed still further, but you won't be able to see where you're heading). Apart from being a great way to chase down your fleeing friends in a deathmatch, the extra momentum is invaluable in the one-player game when time limits are strict, and can mean the difference between a comfortable ride through a level, and a lot of annoying backtracking to hit the same switches over and over again.



STRAFE-TARGETTING

Whatever you do, don't waste your time adjusting your sights to get a spot-on shot at an enemy (or friend). You'll be a sitting duck for opponents in all directions. The best way to give yourself a good chance of hitting your target is to use the up and down strafe buttons to get at roughly the same height as it. Then strafe left or right until it passes through the middle of your cross-hairs and let rip with your primary or secondary weapon. Continue the sideways movement, and anything your opponent fired back at you should just go sailing past.

Keep moving

Whilst this applies mainly to the multi-player game, particularly the PC version where the combatants can't see each other's screens, it's worth bearing in mind when facing a swift, accurate boss such as Nutta in the one-player game. Use all four strafe directions, and keep making quick darting moves – never stay still for too long. A constant jittery motion will make you very hard to hit, and can be used to great effect in conjunction with strafe-targetting.

CIRCLE STRAFE

Strafing one way and moving in the opposite direction. The mainstay of all first-person shoot-em-ups, and something you're no doubt familiar with from countless other games in the past. The circle strafe is as

PLUS don't forget to visit the consoletationzone p98

AND all YOUR tips & cheats in secretsservice Top Tips p102

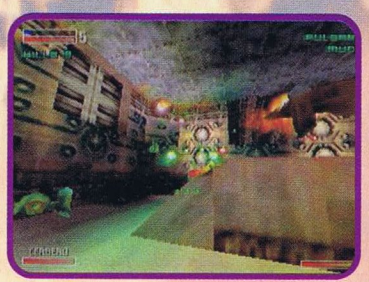
effective in a zero gravity environment as it was in *Doom* and all its many descendants. It's most useful in *Forsaken* for evading homing missiles, as well as for keeping an enemy in your sights: your bike has a much tighter turning circle than a missile, so, when a missile is locked on to you, it's possible to circle it, keeping it safely in your sights until you either lure it towards a wall or shoot it out of the air. If the corridor you're in is too small, you'll still have a second or two to lure it into a larger room.

Expect the expected

If you're travelling in a straight line, the computer will always fire its weapons at a point just in front of you, so the shot arrives there at the same time you do. The best way to avoid running into a suspiciously well-timed enemy bullet is to make subtle changes in your speed (if you're using analogue control), and direction.

Take cover

In some of the more open plan areas you'll find yourself bombarded from all sides, and you won't last long at all. Try clearing each room you come to bit by bit, using the tunnel you entered by as cover. Most computer enemies are fairly low on artificial intelligence, and will either follow you out of a room as soon as they see you, or they'll be unable to shoot at you until you come into range. Zoom into a room, turn around, then zoom out into a smaller corridor – some of the enemies will follow you, and can be picked off with ease. The more sedentary bad guys who are left in the room can then be eliminated at your own pace.



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

There are three types of weapon available to you: primary, secondary missiles, and secondary mines. You will certainly have to use the primary weapons more than anything else, but it's worth being aware of the other types, and making sure you know exactly which weapons are in your inventory at all times.

Primary weapons

Pulsar

This is the standard weapon you start with, and it's also the most useful one once you have powered it up fully. It's accurate, economical on ammo, and it has an excellent rate of fire. The shots seem to hit a point slightly below the crosshairs, so adjust your aim accordingly. Pulsars are also fired by the orbital drones you can collect.

Trojax

The Trojax is a very handy weapon for destroying larger targets such as tanks and gun turrets. By holding down the fire button you can charge up a shot that will take out many adversaries with one hit, or by tapping the button you can release a rapid stream of weaker shots. Be warned though – the Trojax really burns up your ammo.

Transpulse

Transpulse shots will bounce off the tunnel walls, and are useful for taking out enemies in tight corridors where there is little room for them to escape. You can also bounce them around corners to clear an area before you enter. In multi-player mode though, the lack of speed and power makes the Transpulse fairly easy to avoid.

Suss gun

This sprays shots over a huge area, especially when powered up, and is certainly a good way to ensure that you hit whatever is flying in front of you. However, it doesn't cause a great deal of damage, and it's difficult to hit a specific fixed target with it. The ammo is also in short supply, so this will probably be your least used weapon.

Beam laser

Gives an instant effect at any range, making it the easiest weapon of all to aim. It's also very powerful when fully charged, and is useful against any enemy, particularly in deathmatches. You'll have to keep an eye on the laser temperature gauge though, as it's prone to overheating, leaving you defenceless.

Secondary (Missiles)

MUG

The most basic of all missiles, MUGs are only really of any use as a backup to your primary weapon. It's slow to reach its target, it has a small blast radius, and it's very hard to hit a moving target with it. MUGs are best employed against stationary targets such as gun turrets or multi-player opponents who have got stuck in a corner.

MFRL

With low power and no automatic aiming, it's rather like the MUG, but a lot more useful thanks to it's phenomenal rate of fire. It's possible to completely carpet bomb a wide area in a matter of seconds, making it well worth seeking out. Beware of firing it in a confined area, as the chain explosion effect can wipe you out just as quickly.

Solaris

More powerful than a standard missile, and featuring a very accurate homing device. It's most useful in multi-player mode, where your enemies are a bit sharper than the CPU opposition, or against the boss bikers in one-player mode. Don't expect it to be able to turn sharp corners and allow plenty of clearance for walls.

Scatter
The most irritating weapon to be hit with, and the best to find in a deathmatch. It will home in on an opponent and rob him of all his weapons, leaving him vulnerable to a sustained attack while he's frantically trying to pick up the scattered power-ups. Can also be used to steal items such as the GOM from the CPU bikers.

Titan
After the Titan's initial blast, it releases several smaller warheads which lock on to nearby enemies. These can actually cause more damage than the main explosion, so it can be more effective to aim the Titan at a wall near a group of targets, rather than try to hit one target head on. Stay well clear of the blast radius.

Gravgon
Now these are just crap aren't they? The Gravgon creates a sort of force field that sucks you in and holds you for a few seconds. Wandering into one is the most annoying experience in *Forsaken* but, fortunately, it's possible to escape. Try using three direction buttons together and you should be able to twist out and away from danger.

Secondary (Mines)

Quantum/Purge mines
These two work in exactly the same way, with the Quantum mine being the more powerful. Not much use in the one-player game, but they're a great help in wiping out the competition in a deathmatch. The chain reaction effect can be devastating if several Purge mines are laid near a single Quantum.

Pine mine
This is a kind of portable missile launcher, and dropping it near the only entrance to a room (along with a Quantum mine or two) can effectively seal off an entire section of a level. Unlike the other mines, it can't be set off by the person who planted it. PC owners can also take advantage of the mine cam viewer to remotely 'occupy' two rooms at once.

BEAT THE SYSTEM
Apologies to PC and PlayStation gamers, but the following tips are specific to the N64 version.

Infinite lives
Lives are certainly in short supply in *Forsaken*, but there is an easy way to stock up with as many resnic reanimators as you can carry. Simply find one of the extra life icons, collect it, then restart your mission. Your life total will have gone up by one, and you can collect the extra life as many times as you like before continuing on your quest. Whenever you start to run low again, just return back to the extra life level.

Save after any level
On the N64 version, you can only save your game at specific points. To avoid having to play your way through several levels you've already seen every time you switch your N64 on, you can go back to an easy level with a save point and replay that instead. Your entire progress will be saved on the memory card and you can turn the console off without losing three or four hard-fought levels.

Change character
If you don't want to use the same character all the time in the one-player game, after any mission go back and select a multi-player game, and highlight the character you want to change to. Press B to go back to the options screen. Then go back into your old one-player game, and you'll find that you've changed into a whole new pioncyclist.

Hidden characters
On top of the eight standard weirdos that you get to play with, there are a further eight secret characters to find. They are all found at various points throughout the one-player game and the battle mode, and beating them will add them, one by one, to the biker select screen. They are known as: Ex-Cop, HK5, Mephistofun, Jo,

Cerbero, Nubia, Septre, and the wonderfully named Nutta.

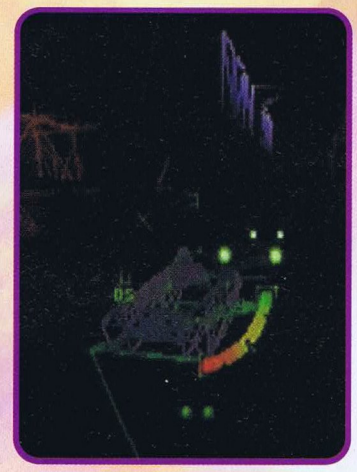
Unlimited Nitros:
B, B, R, D-pad up, D-pad left, D-pad down, Top-C, Left-C.

Psychedelia mode:
A, R, D-pad left, D-pad right, D-pad down, Top-C, Left-C, Bottom-C.

Gore mode:
Z, D-pad down, Top-C, Left-C, Left-C, Left-C, Left-C, Bottom-C.

Wire-frame mode:
L, L, R, Z, D-pad left, D-pad right, Top-C, Right-C.

Cheat codes
To access a few of Iguana's traditional cheats in the N64 version, input the following codes on the intro screen, where it says 'Press Start':



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SHUTEN DOJI -3-
THE STAR HAND KID

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Shuten Doji – The Star Hand Kid 3
English Subtitled Version
Approximately 50 minutes
RRP £12.99 Certificate 18
Catalogue No: VHSSD/0035

Release Date: 3rd August 1998

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There are plenty of games to get on with this month after an unprecedented amount of largely unsolicited mail. So without further ado, let the show begin. Leaving me to get back to my new lightweight, Norwegian xylophone, made in Tromso, lovely town, well situated for the aurora borealis.

Tekken 3
Motorhead
Warhammer: Dark Omen
Formula One
Bomberman 64
Mace: The Dark Ages
Vampire Saviour
Unreal
7th Legion
Castlevania: Symphony Of The Night
Sonic R

consoletationzone

PLAYSTATION

TEKKEN 3

Dear GamesMaster

I got *Tekken 3* on import and I can't get Doctor B. I know you have to go through Tekken Force mode to access him but are there any cheats to make it easier? Thanks

Lewis Kerr, Coventry

Always looking for the easy way out, eh? That's the trouble with the youth of today. Probably. I didn't see a banana till 1968 you know! Here's a foolproof way to get the good Doctor and Gon, *Tekken 3*'s other hidden character. First off, set the game on easy, one round and infinite time. Play the arcade mode and on the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh round let the enemy take all but 5% of your health before coming back to win. If everything's gone according to plan, you'll get a 'Great!' The next round will see you face Gon or Dr. B. Beat them with a few sweeps and they're yours for the playing.

While we're on the subject of *Tekken 3* do you know about Combo Recording? I recently held an entire restaurant captivated with talk of it. Simply go to practice mode and choose Freestyle. At the freestyle options screen, press L1, L2, R1, R2 and ◉ then press ▼ and SELECT to record a combo or replay one, always a sure fire hit with the ladies.

MOTORHEAD

Dear GamesMaster

I love *Motorhead* but desperately need some cheats for it. The sort of cheats that you're famed for in fact. Can you help?

Robin Duggan, Eire

Oh alright, you persuaded me. *Motorhead*'s got cheats of both the code and in-game glitch variety. Naturally, you'll be wanting both, I take it.

For the codes menu...

COWRULES – Unlocks Div two cars and tracks
FRAGTIME – Unlocks Div one cars and tracks
TURBOMS – Unlocks Nolby Hills
LALLAREN – Unlocks all tracks and cars
INSANITY – Changes the demo mode to a brilliant three min race including weird effects and swish camera-cuts.
SUPERCAR – Overhead view

Now try these when playing:

Redrock
Go to the dead end in the beginning of the long straight within 30 seconds of the start and then go backward at a least 20Km/h for a faster car

Gold Bridge
At the petrol station drive backward around the petrol pumps three times within 20 seconds. Pass the door with your speedo reading at least 40 km/h to get disco inferno smoke.

Atlantika
Go from the alley to the left of the road outside the Atlantika central station building to the left corner on the rightside of the building within 20 seconds. The cars will jump about in an odd fashion.

Ruhrstadt
Stand outside The Black Lotus club for at least 15 seconds to give cars a jeep look and feel.

Olympos
Stand on the heli-bridge for ten seconds. This will give you an external camera perspective.

Nolbyhills
Fly into the left garage door with the Digital Illusions sign. Your speed needs to be at least 75 km/h for some top moon gravity action.

WARHAMMER: DARK OMEN

Dear GM

I haven't seen any tips or cheats for *Warhammer Dark Omen* in your mag yet. Is this because there aren't any or because it's slipped even your mighty brain? I would appreciate an answer. Thanks.

R Hetheridge, Dorset

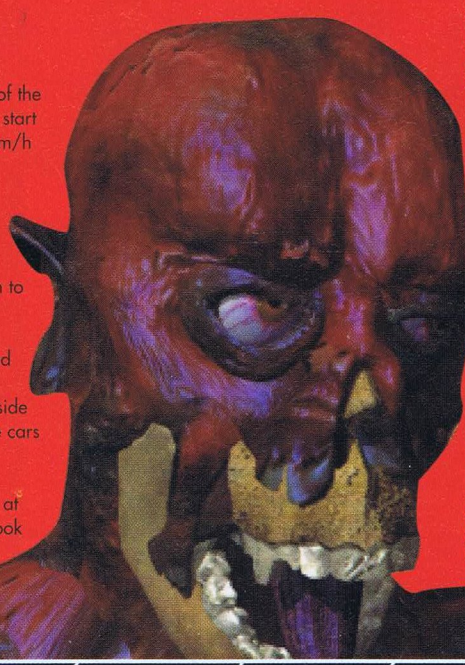
Ha! Nothing slips my mighty brain! Except for the cheat that gives you the Lancia Stratos in *Sega Rally*. I can never remember the bally thing for some reason. Right then, *Warhammer: Dark Omen*. It's packed to its very rivets with cheats:

Enter these by going to the deployment screen and pressing Select. Once you've entered your required cheats, Resume to see them in full sneaky glory.

Skip Battle – R1, R1, L2, L2, R1, R2
Extra Gold – R1, L1, R1, L2, R1, R2
Touch of Death – R1, L1, R2, R2, R1, R1
Rapid Reload – R2, R1, R2, R1, L2, L1
Control Enemy – L2, L2, R2, L2, R1, R1
Pinheads – L2, L2, L2, L2, R1, R2

Need more? How about being able to replay *Warhammer*'s elf-tastic FMV cut-scenes? Enter these on the deployment screen.

The Black Grail – ◄, L1, ◉, L2, ▲, R2
Carnstien and Jewel – R1, ▲, R2, R2, ◉, R1
Hand of Nagash – R2, ◄ R2, ▲, ▼, ◄
Uber Mortis – ◉, ▲, ◉, ►, R1, R2
Victory – L2, ►, ◉, ►, R1, R2
Long March – R1, L2, ▲, ◉, ◄, R2



FORMULA ONE

Dear GamesMaster

Have you got any cheats for *F1* on the PlayStation? Cheers mate.

Paul Townsend, London

SATURN

SONIC R

Dear GamesMaster

You seem to have forgotten about *Sonic R*! This top racer from Sega deserves a good batch of cheating. Any chance you could oblige, oh god-like one?

Stuart Gardner, London

Sonic R's buttock-clenchingly tight on cheats. Here's the full list, unless anyone out there knows better. (Highly unlikely, I know but the clowns who put GM together want me to be friendlier to you lot. Harrumph).

On the title screen press either 'X,Y,A' or 'B' to gain control of the rotating R. Also whilst selecting a character or course, holding the 'L' or 'R' buttons will enable you to zoom in and out on the object. At the character select screen, you can zoom in and out on a character by pressing the 'L' or 'R' buttons.

Mecha-Sonic, Mecha-Tails, Mecha-knuckles and Mecha-Robotnik – find all of the five coins on each course.

Super Sonic – find all the chaos emeralds

Secret course – get a gold cup on each track.

Dr. Robotnik – get the gold cup on the special track (On two-player mode, both players can select the same character by holding down X while pressing C)

VAMPIRE SAVIOUR

Dear GamesMaster

I have been playing the fantastic *Vampire Saviour* on import. My mate reckons there are cheats which translates the text into English. Do you know it and if so could you send it to me?

Hugs n kisses

Andrew Child, Tyne & Wear

Hugs and ruddy kisses! Good God man! Pull yourself together. A firm handshake or a polite Yours sincerely's quite enough thank you young 'un. Anyway, brrr...here's some *Vampire Saviour* cheatage:

EX Options

To go to the EX options screen, beat the game without continuing. Then go to the title screen, highlight OPTION, hold L + R and press START. You'll have access to a new options screen that lets you mess about with loads of different options and, well done your mate, translates all that fiendish Japanese text into our mother tongue. Gawd bless the Queen!

Play as Oboro 'Shin Bishamon'

After you fight against him in arcade mode, go to the Character Select screen and move the cursor over to Bishamon. Next hold the L and R Buttons for five seconds and press any buttons.

Play as Dark Gallon

When selecting your fighter, highlight Gallon and then press 'L' and all three punch buttons at the same time. If you got it right Gallon's colour will mysteriously change.

Fight Oboro 'Shin Bishamon'

To fight against Oboro, choose the punch colour if you're player one or the kick colour if you're player two, then end the game without losing a single round and also clock up three Ex Super or Darkforce finishes. if done correctly, Oboro should challenge you after the last boss.

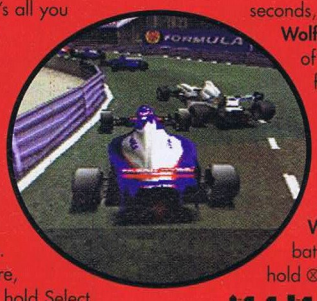
Play as Shadow the Soul Stealer

Highlight the Random Select icon at the Character Select screen, and press both the 'L & R' buttons five times, holding them down on the fifth time. Then hit all three punches, and the Soul Stealer will appear behind your character. If you win, the Soul Stealer will move to the defeated character and possess him, and you'll fight the next match as the character you just defeated.

Vampire Voice

After all that troublesome button-fondling how about this for a light hearted jape? Reset the game by pressing A+B+C+Start. You'll return to the title screen and hear an evil voice say "Vampire." Tape it and play to small children to scare them witless.

Are you sure that's all you wanted to know? What about the capital of Peru? It's Lima. For all these cheats, you need to go to the options screen where it says Practice, Qualify and Race. Once you get there, quickly press and hold Select then whack in the following presses:



Bonus Track – ◀, ●, ●, ▲, ▲, ●, ◀ and ▶. You'll now see the message "Bonus Track Activated" appear.

Buggy Mode – ▶, ▲, ▲, ◀, ▲, ▲ and ▲

Motorbikes – ▼, ▲, ●, ▲, ▶, ▲, ● and ▲

Lava Track – ●, ●, ▲, ▶, ▶, ● and ⊗

CASTLEVANIA: SYMPHONY OF THE NIGHT

Dear GamesMaster

Could you please, please, please give my son who is driving me mad some or all of the tips for *Castlevania*. If not I'll be really tempted to sellotape his mouth together. It is bad enough him being a teenager let alone one stuck on a PlayStation game. So please, save a child.

Dawn Rawlinson
Mother of Dean Rawlinson

Have you considered running him up a chimney? It's a fine profession for any young man. Before he becomes a sooty faced urchin, console him with these tips .

Alucard's Special Moves...

Hellfire (15MP): ▲, ▼, ▼-▶, ▶ and ●

Summon Spirit (5MP): ◀, ▶, ▲, ▼ and ●

Soul Steal (50MP): ◀, ▶, ▼-▶, ▼, ▼-◀, ◀, ▶ and ●

Dark Metamorphosis (10MP): ◀, ▲-◀, ▲, ▲-▶, ▶ and ●

Tetra Spirits (20MP): hold up for two seconds, then press ▲-▶, ▶, ▼-▶, ▼ and ●

Wolf Charge (10MP, must have 'skill of wolf', and must also be in Wolf form): ▼, ▼-▶, ▶ and ●

Sword Brothers (30MP, must be using the "Sword" familiar for this to work): ▼, ▼-▶, ▶, ▲-▶, hold up for two seconds, then press ▼ and ●

Wing Smash (8MP, must be in bat form when performing this): hold ⊗, ▲, ▲-◀, ◀, ▼-◀, ▼, ▼-▶, ▶ and then release ⊗

How's that Mrs Rawlinson? There's also a way of getting extra options. At the name select screen, enter your name as AXELORD then go to the Settings screen. Finally, to bring all *Castlevania* activity to a close here's a tricky glitch to up your experience to massive levels. Play through normally until you get your bat familiar. Then go back to the start of the game where the zombies keep coming out of the ground. Simply stand on the stairs where the zombies can't reach you and turn your bat familiar on. The bat will kill most of the zombies that appear (make sure you're far away enough to avoid any that get past his wings of steel. The great thing about this is that you'll both, quite liderally mate, fly up the experience levels. Don't forget the advice about the chimney though, it's one of the only proper jobs for children since they shut all the cotton mills in Oldham.

N64

BOMBERMAN 64

Dear GamesMaster

I'm completely bored with *Bomberman* on my N64. Please tell me there's something I can do to make it more exciting. Go on.

No name given

No, absolutely not. Oh alright then, I can never resist a 'Go on' at the end of a letter. To spice the multi-player mode up go to the game selection screen (where you'll find Adventure mode, Battle mode etc). Press pause on your controller or tap start quickly until you hear a chime. Now go to the battle mode and four extra levels will appear, as if by magic. Good, no?

MACE: THE DARK AGES

Dear GamesMaster

I've just bought *Mace: The Dark Ages* and I think it's quite cool. But some characters are crap and I've heard there are six hidden characters and my mate got Hellknight and Dregon and I know that you have to complete the game to get the bosses. So PLEASE make sure that you don't have to complete the game to get the other six characters because I can't be arsed to complete it.

Cheers mate.

David Mclean, Nottingham

PS Please reply quickly because I'm going to smash this game to bits

"Can't be arsed!" Tsk:

Play as Ichiro and Gar

To access Gar Gunderson (War Mech) and Ichiro wait for the copyright screen to load up (the first screen in the game) and press Right, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, Left, Down on your controller pad. (That's rotating the control pad in a counter-clockwise direction). If you've done everything right you'll hear a

N64

chime. Now go to the character selection screen and Ichiro and Gar Gunderson will be selectable just above the Executioner. Honest, guv.

Play as Janitor Ned
At the character select screen, move the cursor to the following fighters and press START on each one: Koyasha, Executioner, Lord Deimos, Xiao Long. Now pick any fighter and press A or B.

Play as Pojo
To be POJO, you must perform TARIA's execution in one-player mode (and then continue) or in two-player mode. Then on your next match in the select screen, go to Taria and hold down START and EVADE. Press an attack button to select him.

Bunny Slippers
At the character select screen, move the cursor to the following fighters and press START on each one: Ragnar, Dregan, Koyasha. Choose your fighter, then press A or B and they'll come padding into the ring wearing what can only be described as your mum's footwear.

Play as Grendal in Two-Player Mode
Starting in two-player mode, one player must have three wins. Then on your next match in the select screen go to the Executioner and hold down START and EVADE. Grendal will appear. Continue to hold down those buttons and press an attack button to select. Now you control the RAGE known as Grendal!

Secret Battles
To unlock each secret, move to each character listed and tap start after each one, then go to your desired character and select as usual. All of these secrets are for two-player mode except for the Random AI.

Battle Castle	Characters Mordus Kull, Taria, Ragnar
Big Noggin	Ragnar, Al'Rashid, Takeshi
Random AI	Hell Knight, Xiao Long, Dregan, Namira
Miniature Golf	Koyasha, Mordos Kull, Takeshi

PC

UNREAL

Dear GM
I need all the filthy cheating details on the awesome *Unreal*. Can you deliver or shall I go elsewhere?
Matt Shipley, via e-mail

Press Tab, then type in any of the following:
Allammo - Gives you 999 ammo for all your guns
Fly – Lets you fly
Walk – Stop flying
Ghost – No clip through walls
PlayersOnly – Freezes time
God – God mode
Open Mapname – Jump to any map
Behindview1 – Tomb Raider-style view
Summon itemname – Lets you add baddies and objects to the game. Type SUMMON then EIGHTBALL, FLAKCANNON, NALI, SKAARWARRIOR.

7TH LEGION

Dear GM
When I first got your mag (issue 60) I saw the review of *7th Legion* and it got a massive 94%. So I naturally ran out and bought it and it's great. BUT (and here it comes) I'm stuck could you please help me pleeeeeeease oh big man,god of all cheats I need HELP!!
Louis Edwards, Kent
PS How's the xylophone playing coming along.

This is one of those tricky PC directory fiddling cheats, Louis, (the xylophone's coming along nicely as if you need telling) so, go careful and, more importantly, don't come crying to me if it all goes horribly wrong and your PC stops working.

To edit the vehicles look at the file called missions in your .\data directory. At the bottom of each mission profile there's a header called PVSTART. That indicates the vehicle you're starting with. Each number represents how many of a certain unit you start with.

Be careful when editing this as sometimes your map will load and a large proportion of your forces will be blown up. Here are those all important unit places with each number listed representing a zero in the list from left to right. There should be something like 44 numbers.

1st zero – Ore Carrier	**2** – Ore Truck
3 – Crusader	**4** – Oppressor
5 – Crucifier	**6** – APC
7 – Faith Hammer	**8** – Annihilator
9 – Purifier	**17** – Mortar unit
18 – Priest	**19** – Medic
20 – Slaven Rider	**34** – Inquisitor AC
35 – Revelator AC	**37** – Nova AC
39 – Redeemer AC	

That last one is your mobile construction vehicle.

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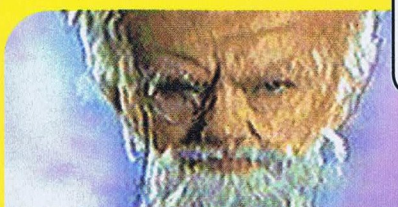

Still struggling with that game? Looking for an elusive set of cheats? Just plain hopeless and cack-handed? Well never fear the GamesMaster is here to smooth away all your gaming blues!

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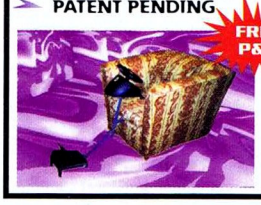

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Secrets service

PC PlayStation MD GB N64

There's one thing that unites the games spongs who've joined the ranks of my Secrets Service... a desire to share the greatest tips and cheats available to humanity. Strike a blow for gaming democracy and join us!

PC CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 97/98

Here's a cheat that I found myself and didn't simply nab off the Internet like most of your readers.

When you get sacked by a club, go to the 'manager options' screen and !!RETIRE!! as a manager. Then select 'add more managers' and type your name as you do at the start of the game. Choose the same club as you got sacked from at the next screen and you end up, not back at the beginning, but instead you carry on from where you were.

Matthew Storey, Romsey.

PlayStation TOMB RAIDER 2

Level skip: Take the flare out, hold, walk and take one step forward, then take one step backwards. Take your finger off, walk and turn around three times, then simply jump forward.

All Weapons: Do the same as the level skip, but at the end jump backwards instead of forwards.

Neal Hewitt, Aberdeen

PlayStation GRAND THEFT AUTO

Almighty big-headed one. I have cheats for secret missions, and cars in *Grand Theft Auto*.

LIBERTY CITY, GANSTA BANG

Bus = North East Fort Kew
Taxi = North West park
GTS Beast = South West Island heights
Tanker = Law island docks

COSSIE: SOUTH WEST BRIX

4 x 4 = New Guernsey docks
Bulldog = South West Telbury
Stallion = North Central Hackenskish

HEIST

ALMIGHTY:

Bulldog = Central Guernsey city

MANDERINE MAYHEM:

Love Wagon = West Ave Valley
Tank 1 = West Sailors Wharf
Tank 2 = Hidden Island, beside red bridge (South East Woodside) use submerged road south of island.

PC AGE OF EMPIRES

Hello all at GM, thought you might like to check some of these over, they're a load of chat message codes I discovered recently.

MEDUSA – Villagers turn into Medusa. If killed they turn into black riders. If killed again they turn into heavy catapults.

DIE DIE DIE – You all die

HARIKARI – Suicide

PHOTON MAN – Laser guy

KILLX – Where 'X' is the player's position (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8)

Alex Graham, Isle of Man

PC CARMAGEDDON

Some cheats for Carmageddon, enjoy folks...

Hit 1 in the game for a Co-ordinate and Mile-counter display. Type these slowly and hard when driving (slow down and stop driving then hit Start to type...)

LODSA MONEY – Givemelard
PEDESTRIANS GLUED TO THE GROUND – Spamspamspamspam
GIANT PEDESTRIANS – Smalludders
EXPLOSIVE PEDESTRIANS – Superhoops
HOT ROD – Igloodun
TURBO PEDESTRIANS – Funny jam
LUNAR GRAVITY – Ihavesomespam
PINBALL MODE – Mosseontheloose
BOUNCY BOUNCY! – Chickenfodder
OH DEAR, JELLY SUSPENSION – Buyyournextgame

Matthew Wing, Essex

PlayStation WORMS

Landscape codes...

For some of the best level on Worms...

00956 Desert Storm
46463 Martian Scape

29726	Low Bridge
4802043	A Bridge too far
5154527	Lollipop Bridge
208041	Alternate Jungle
436642	Hell
97155	Three's a crowd
39054687	Beach Weather
62332782	Forestscape
7007230	Snow Joke

Bryan Mc Connell, Liverpool

HARDCORE 4X4

To get the hidden 'Mother' truck, boot up the *Hardcore 4x4*, but do not press the start button. Wait for the demo to begin and make sure it has the black truck driving around. When the demo finishes, you can press start. When closing your truck you'll notice the new and excellent 'Mother' truck there.

Matthew Dee, Ireland

MD SONIC 3

To get extra lives and a level designer on *Sonic 3*, press in the following...
UP, UP, DOWN, DOWN, UP, UP, UP, UP at the beginning of the game. Go into sound test, hold A, and press Start. Now form a spin dash when Tails is in there. Press B, (Tails should still be spinning) find a picture of a badnick, put it on Tails and keep pressing C.

8th special zone: Go to sound test, play 1, 3, 5, 7 (Angel Island Hydrocity, Marble Gardens and Carnival Night) go to special zone two hold A and Start.

Super Sonic: GO to sound test. Play 2, 4, 5, 6. (Angel Island, Hydrocity, Marble Gardens act one and Marble Gardens act two). Hold A and Start. Collect 50 rings, double jump and you are Super Sonic. Neat!

Mark White, Widnes.

WWF IN YOUR HOUSE

Here are some moves and combos for this top grappling game. (All have a hold P for three second move, apart from Hunter Hearst Helmsley)
UNDERTAKER – Umsmash, hold P for three seconds then release.
Tombstone hit – Toward-toward-SK
Spirit push – Down-toward-K
Spirit pull – Down-away-K
Bat attack – Down-away, down-away-SK
Combo – Toward-toward-SK
Reversal – Down-down-SK
BRET HART – Eye rake-Hold P for three seconds then release.
Title belt whip – Down toward-down toward-P
Reversal – Down-down-down-SK
Combo – Toward-toward-SK
VADER
Masterdon Morph – Hold P for three seconds then release.
Flaming Mask – Toward-toward-P
Vader Roar – Down-back-SK
Reversal – Toward-toward-SP
Combo – Toward-toward P
SHAWN MICHAELS
Laser fist – Down-toward-SP
Bag throw – Toward-toward-P
Combo – Toward-toward-K
Reversal – Away-away-SP

Aaron Jones, Bromley

SUPER CASTLEVANIA 4

Here are two action replay cheats for this classic game...
Infinite lives
7E007C03
Infinite time
7E13F095

Alan Kasin, London

CRASH BANDICOOT 2

I have found two secret stages for the marsupial-madness that is *Crash Bandicoot 2*...

TURTLE WOODS Level 1
When you see an Aku Aku face in the ground, bellyflop in and you go to a secret stage. When you get to the pink birds, make sure you jump into the top platforms first. This helps you towards the 62 boxes needed for a perfect.

UN-BEARABLE – Level 15
When the big bear slides along the wooden bridge, wait for him to fall, then fall yourself. You go down to a small area where you get help for the 58 boxes needed for a perfect.

Paul Mosley, Wallsend

RESIDENT EVIL 2

I've found some cheats for top zombie-blaster *Resident Evil 2*.

Firstly, to change your clothes, start a normal game with Leon or Claire and make your way to the police station. Without picking up anything at all, that includes ammo and the shotgun or bow gun from that shopkeeper. When you arrive outside, go down the steps and Brad Vickers from the first *Resident Evil* is there. Not as a human but as a zombie! Kill him and grab the special key from him. This can be used on the locker in he darkroom, next to the stairs which take you to the second floor of the police station.

Secondly, if you want a rocket-launcher with infinite ammo, start a normal game and complete it in under 2 hours and 30 minutes, without saving once. If you want three weapons with infinite ammo, complete Leon and Claire's second mission in under 2 hours and 10 minutes. Leon gets a magnum shotgun and a standard gun whilst Claire gets a chain machine gun and a standard gun.

Matthew Cox, Kent.

SKULL MONKEYS

I've recently spent some time playing around with various passwords on *Skull Monkeys*. After some blood, sweat and quite a few tears here are a few for your readers...

SNO LEVEL... ◉+ R1+ ▣+ △ + ◉ + R2
SEWER LEVEL... ◉ + L1 + ⊗ + ⊗ + ◉ + ⊗ + ▣ + ⊗ + ⊗ + △ +L2
MONKEY RUSHMORE... (94 LIVES) R1 + L2 + R1 + L2 + R1 + L2 + R1 + L2 + R1 + L2 + R1 + L2
SKULL MONKEY CAGE... (94 LIVES) R1 + L2 + R2 + L1 + R1 + L2 + R2 + L1 + R1 + R2 + L2 + R1
KLOGG (BOSS)... L1 + L2 + L2 + L1 + L2 + L2 + L1 + L2 + L2 + L1 + L2 + L2. (27 LIVES)
CASTLE DEL LOS MUERTOS... (20 LIVES) L1 + L1 + R1 + R1 + L1 + L1 + R1 + R1 + L1 + L1 + R1 + R1
DEATH GARDEN... (98 LIVES) △ + △ + ▣ + ▣ + △ + △ + ▣ + ▣ + △ + △ + ▣ + ▣
MONKEY IMAGE... (BOSS, 52 LIVES +VARIOUS POWERS) L1 + △ + L1 + △ + L1 + △ + L1 + △ + L1 + △ + L1 + △.
SOAR HEAD... (88 LIVES + VARIOUS POWERS) ⊗ + L2 + R2 + L2 + R2 + L2 + R1 + R1 + R1 + L2 + ▣ + L2.

John Turner, Hull

MANX TT

I have a cheat for *Manx TT*
At the main menu, hold left shift and right shift +X +Y +Z, until you hear someone shout, "Go!". This'll give you the Superbike mode.

Christopher Cowan, Dumfrieshire.

ACTUAL SOCCER 2

Here are some cheats for *Actual Soccer 2* cheats. Type them in on the main menu screen...
Gremlin11 – ◄, ►, ▣, ◉, ▲, ▼, ▣, ◉
Super fury animals – ◄, ▣, ►, ►, ◉, ▲, ▼
Ghost ball – ▣, ▣, ◄, ◄, ►, ►, ◉, ◉
Beach ball – ◄, ►, ◄, ▲, ◄, ►, ▣, ▣
Dwarfs – ◉, ▼, ▼, ▣, ▲, ▲, ◄, ►
Invisible Players – ▣, ◉, ▼, ◉, ▲, ►, ▣, ◄
Giants – ▲, ▼, ▼, ►, ▣, ▣, ◉, ◉
Floodlight failure – ◄, ◄, ◄, ◉, ►, ►, ►, ▣
Black and White – ▲, ▼, ▲, ▣, ◉, ▲, ▼, ▲

Tom Coleman, Derbyshire

DONKEY KONG COUNTRY

Here you go GamesMaster take a look at this ape-tastic stuff.

Mine Cart Carriage – At the start of the level, hold down Y and press B. Jump over the cannon, it'll take you to the end of the level.

Super Mario Bros – On level 1.2 at the end of the level, jump over the pipe on to the bricks and run as far as possible. You come to three warp zones to levels two, three and four. Choose level four.

On level 4.2 after you have made the second jump, there will be a bean stalk. Climb up the bean stalk to warp zones six, seven and eight. If you miss this don' t worry there is another warp zone to level five if you jump up on to bricks like on level 1.2

Andrew Wade, Burnley.

CLAYFIGHTER

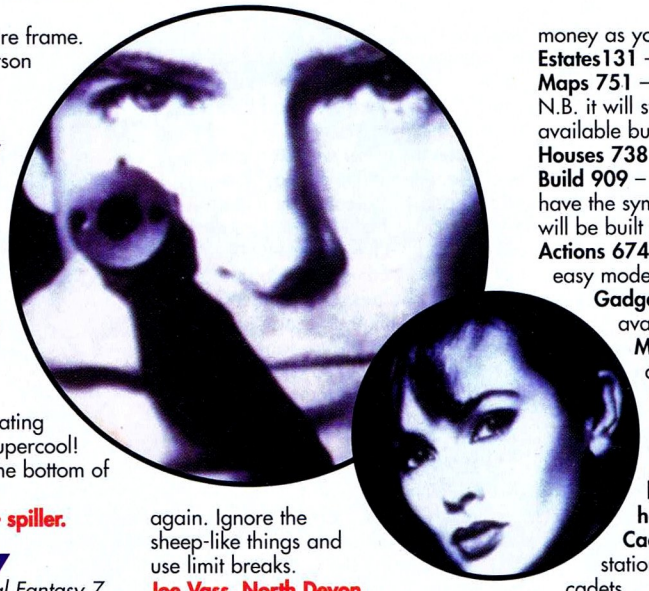
I have a cheat...
Cheat mode – On the character selection screen, hold L and press up, right, left, down, B,A
Fight as Dr. Kiln – On the character selection screen, hold L and press B, left, up, right, down, A
Fight as Sumo Santa – On the character selection screen, hold L, press A down, right, up, left, B
Fight as Boogerman – On the character selection screen, hold L and press C-up, C-right, C-left, C-down, B, A

Jason Dutton, Newcastle.

TEKKEN 2

Hey people, I've got some great cheats for *Tekken 2*...
Get all character bosses – Simply complete the game with any of the normal ten characters.
Get Kazuya – Complete the game with any character boss, (eg. Anna)
Get Devil or Angel – Complete the game with Kazuya.
Get Roger or Alex – Get Devil or Angel and start a new game on arcade mode on the third stage. Finish the last round with a particle of energy left. If it's worked you will hear, "Great!" and then get either Alex or Roger.
Big head mode – Get every character in the game and hold select. Then pick your fighter. Keep select held down until the fight begins.
First person view (one-player mode only) – Get all the characters in the game, then hold L1 and L2 and select your fighter. When the fight starts your

fighter will appear as a wire frame. Then it'll go into a first-person perspective. Enjoy!
Chris Ward, Luton.



GOLDENEYE 007

One day I was playing *Goldeneye 007* (the action game) and made an extraordinary discovery. When you have done the 'Tiny Bond' cheat, go to any level with stairs (for example the facility). Now crouch and walk onto the stairs. Now Bond will appear to be floating in the middle of the air! Supercool! However when you pass the bottom of the stairs you'll fall down.
Jonas den ultimate N64 – spiller.

FINAL FANTASY 7

I've recently mastered *Final Fantasy 7*, and have decided to share my wisdom with the nice people at GM.
Boss 1: Scorpion Guard
Use Cloud's bolt magic and Barret's normal attack, but if it raises its tail and shakes, don't attack otherwise it'll unleash a powerful tail laser which takes off over loop.
Boss 2 : Ain Buster
Very easy. Use limit breaks, bolt magic and standard attacks, it'll all be over soon.
Boss 5 : Jenova Speclmin
He's vulnerable to fire again. Ignore the sheep-like things and use limit breaks.
Joe Vass, North Devon

MK TRILOGY

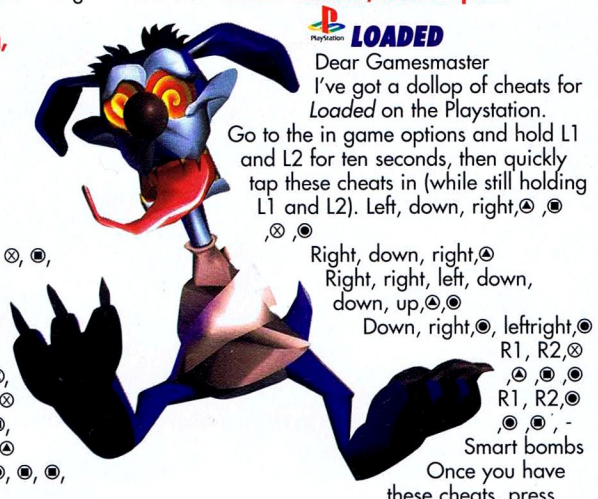
Here are some other tips I know for the time being...
Play as Chameleon
Start a normal game. Now when the character selection screen comes up, move your selection box to a portrait of any ninja character. Select this character then quickly press and hold left, L1, R1, high punch and high kick. Keep these held down until the match starts. Chameleon will now appear in a puff of smoke.
Play as 'classic' characters
The following characters all have two versions in *MK Trilogy*: Rayden, Kung Lao, Jax and Kano. Move your selection box to one of the fighters and press the Select button. The box displaying their portrait will rotate, revealing an alternative version of that character.
Stage select (all versions)
On the character selection screen, move the selection box to Sonya's portrait. Now push up and Start. If you've done this correctly the screen will shake. When both fighters have been selected you can cycle through all the battle arenas that are featured in the game.
Enable the '?' square on the options screen.
Go to the options screen and hold down the following. R1, R2, L1, L2. Now push up. If you get it right a tone will sound. The '?' block will now be selectable. Now options, like one-button fatalities, will be yours to select.
Charles Rasmussen, (computer addict) Surrey.

CONSTRUCTOR

Here are some cheats for that top building game *Constructor*.
Type in these cheats after you've clicked on 'play game' and the options screen is displayed. Then type in the following cheats...
Tenants 127 – All the tenants
Worker 902 – buy workers
Gangster 822 – Convert workers into gangsters.
Weapons 473 – All weapons
Fences 673 – All the fences
Loans 039 – borrow as much money as you want
Estates131 – All estates
Maps 751 – Any map in any mode
N.B. it will still say that they are not available but they are
Houses 738 – All buildings available
Build 909 – If you press CTRL when you have the symbol to build a house then it will be built instantly
Actions 674 –Allows stupid actions in easy mode
Gadgets 337 – All gadgets are available
Missions 824 – Press ALT 1 during the game to turn off council missions.
Complain840 – When in game ALT C – no complaints in the mob headquarters
hold ALT M – more bribes.
Cadets 552 – In the police station hold ALT P – infinite cadets.
Teams 419 – Change to any team.
Note: to initiate the cheats press 'C' after you've accepted the game and are playing.
Michael Goulding, Cheadle.

CRASH BANDICOOT

I have got some cheats for *Crash Bandicoot* on the Playstation.
6% complete – ●, ⊗, ■, ▲, ●, ■, ■, ▲
11% complete – ■, ■, ⊗, ■, ■, ▲, ⊗, ▲
13% complete – ⊗, ■, ⊗, ●, ⊗, ■, ▲, ⊗
18% complete – ■, ■, ▲, ⊗, ●, ●, ⊗, ▲
22% complete – ●, ■, ■, ●, ●, ⊗, ⊗, ⊗
100% – complete game it gets you all 32 levels all keys and gems – ▲, ▲, ▲, ▲, ⊗, ■, ▲, ▲, ▲, ■, ⊗, ▲, ●, ▲, ▲, ▲, ●, ■, ⊗, ⊗, ⊗, ⊗
Jill Waldock, Co Durham



SONIC

I think I've found a level select for that super-fast hedgehog, *Sonic*. All you have to do is, when the Sega logo fades away, push the game in a little. It's as easy as that, and by the way this helps.
Mandeep Sidhu, Scotland

SIM CITY CLASSIC

More money:- Hold down shift, and type 'FUND' and you'll get $10,000. Every three times you do this there's an earthquake. So when you do it twice, save the game and exit. Load up your saved game again and do it twice, save the game and so on. Keep doing this. This cheat makes the game a little more interesting, obviously !
Paul Sommerville, Northern Ireland.

GOLDENEYE

Go to the building where you meet Valentin and talk to him. As you come out turn left and keep going, until you reach a cracked window. Walk through the window (watch out for the guard inside) and you will find a rocket launcher and some body armour.
Angela Stanton.

GRAND THEFT AUTO

To obtain an 'insane stunt bonus' and loads of points on either the PC or Playstation version of *Grand Theft Auto*, do the following:- On either level of the second city, drive to the North East Richman and look for a green penetrator with orange windows parked on some grass next to a tree. Get in the penetrator and go straight ahead at full speed (there is no need to steer left or right). You will cut between two buildings before eventually jumping off a ledge over a large stretch of water. If done correctly you will land safely on the other side of the water and the message 'insane stunt bonus' will appear and your points will soar.
Adam Martin.

TOMB RAIDER

Dear Gamesmaster
This is my cheat for *Tomb Raider*:- L2, R2, ▲, L1, L1,● , R2, L2. This is for a level skip.
Daniel Hotstom, Southampton.

LOADED

Dear Gamesmaster
I've got a dollop of cheats for *Loaded* on the Playstation.
Go to the in game options and hold L1 and L2 for ten seconds, then quickly tap these cheats in (while still holding L1 and L2). Left, down, right,▲ ,■ ,⊗ ,●
Right, down, right,▲
Right, right, left, down, down, up,▲,●
Down, right,●, leftright,● R1, R2,⊗ ,▲ ,■ ,● R1, R2,● ,● ,■ , -
Smart bombs
Once you have these cheats, press start then let the maniacs kill you. Once you explode, quickly press start again and go to 'HEALTH' and press the ⊗ button on it. Then when you play you will be an exploded player. You cannot get items or go through doors, but it's fun to blend with the other blood that's on the floor.
Darren Roberts, North Wales.

FIGHTING FORCE

Dear Gamesmaster
I was looking in my cheat pad when I picked out some cheats for *Fighting Force*.
Invincibility and level select : At the main screen hold ► + ● + L1+R2 until 'cheat mode' appears at the bottom of the screen. Quickly choose options and you can get invincibility or start at any level.

WCW NITRO

I have discovered the following codes for *WCW Nitro* on the Playstation, here they are.
Do the following codes on the options screen.
R1, R2, R1, R2, select, to activate the Graveyard ring.
R1, R2, R1, R2, select, to activate the Space Ship ring, and so on you will find these rings:-
Circus ring, Bee hive ring, Turbo ring
Wonderland ring, Boudior ring
Hall of mirrors ring, Reck room ring

Psycodelic ring, Disco ring, Jungle ring 1984 ring, Quark ring, Texas ring
Khalifa Rashid, Bahrain Middle East.

MD FIFA 95

On the option screen, press the following codes for cheats :
DREAM TEAM – A,A,B,B,C,C,A,A.
SUPER GOALIE – A,A,A,A,A,B,B,B,B,B.
SUPER DEFENCE – B,B,B,B,B,C,B.
CURVE BALL – B,A,C,B,C,C.
SUPER POWER – B,A,B,B,B,B,B,B,B,B.
Chris Gentles, Strathaven.

PC TYRIAN

For hidden ships, enter at the title screen.

SHIP	CODE
Captured shop	Enemy
Experimental paz	Techno
Stormwind the elemental	Stormwind
Ninja star	Stealth
Main weapon	Destruct
Food ship nine	Weird

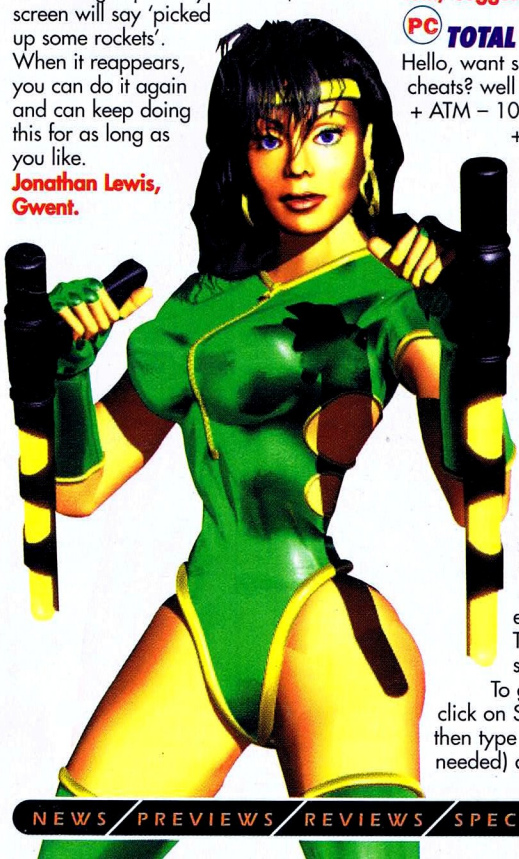
PlayStation JEDI KNIGHT

For cheats press 'T' during the game and press:
Red 5 – All weapons
Swamp rat – All items
Jedi wannabe (space 1) - Invincibility
Eriamjh – Fly mode
Imayoda -- Light jedi
Carl Horabin, Widnes.

N64 GOLDENEYE 007

Dear Gamesmaster
Whilst playing *Goldeneye 007* the other day I noticed a strange little glitch.

Go to the temple of rockets. Up in the main hall (the room with the hole in the floor) pick up the KF7 and look at the two boxes of ammo. Pick up the left one then run down and pick up the rocket launcher. Go back up to the main hall and wait for the box to reappear. When it does, run after it holding the KF7. The screen will say 'picked up some ammo'. However, when you step back it will still be there. Now run over it with the rocked launcher grasped in your hand, and the screen will say 'picked up some rockets'. When it reappears, you can do it again and can keep doing this for as long as you like.
Jonathan Lewis, Gwent.



N64 KILLER INSTINCT GOLD

Get all the bonus options, without having to have your scrawny butt kicked every time.
ACCESS ALL OPTIONS – Wait for the character profiles to come up. Now press Z,B,A,L,A,Z (that's the L button on the top left of the controller). The announcer will say 'Perfect' if you have done it correctly.
PLAY AS GARGOS – To play as Gargos, wait for the character profiles to come up. Now press Z,A,R,Z,A,B (that's the R button on top of the controller). Gargos will laugh if you have done it correctly.
MULTI COLOURED PLAYERS – Wait for the character profiles to come up. Now press Z,B,A,Z,A and left shoulder button to automatically save and enable you to play as any character in black and white or gold.
Kevin Switek, King's Lynn

PlayStation SOUL BLADE

Play as evil Siegfreid – Get all Siegfreid's eight weapons.
Play as Soul Edge – Beat arcade mode with all characters, or leave the game for 20 hours.
Play as Han Myong – When you have Souledge, beat arcade using Hwang, then Seung Mina immediately after Hwang.
Play as Sophitia without armour – Get all Sophitia's 8 weapons.
Play as Sophitia in a bathing suit – Get all 70 weapons in edge master mode.
David Duguid, Scotland.

PlayStation MICRO MACHINES v3

To Gamesmaster
Please can you put my cheat in the best mag on the face of the earth which is *Micro Machines v3*.
These codes can be entered at any time during the game. To cancel them just re-enter code.
Double speed – ●,⊗,●,●,▲,⊗,⊗,⊗,⊗.
Blow up all guns – ⊗,▲,●,●.
Tom, Coggershall

PC TOTAL ANNIHILATION

Hello, want some totally awesome cheats? well here they are.
+ ATM – 1000 metal and energy
+ CDPLAY – Hyperspeed music
+ CONTROL* – Lets you control player * = 1 – 3
+ DITHER – Dithering instead of L.O.S.
+ DOUBLE SHOT – Weapons damage x2
+ HALF SHOT – Weapons damage 1/2
+ 1 LOOSE – You loose
+ 1 WIN – You win
+ KILL – All units die
+ NOWISEE – Reveal map and disables L.O.S
+ NOENERGY – Gives you 0 energy
+ NOMETAL – Gives you 0 metal
+ NOSHAKE – No explosion shakes
These will only work in skirmish missions.

To get the level select cheat, click on SINGLE PLAYER GAME, then type Dr Death (no capitals needed) and a bone will appear between 'load game' and 'previous menu' icons. Click the bone and you have it.

N64 GOLDENEYE 007

Ahhh call Goldeneye cheatless would you? Well, you're right but here is something you can try.
On level eight, while in jail use the magnet in your watch (that seems to stop time when you go into it) to get the key on the wall. While the magnet is still on, go out and you will get 6 throwing knives, this will only work if you go out when the guard is outside the door of the jail.
So instead of saying "Keep up the good work chaps", I'll end this letter by saying "Bye cool mag dudes".
Jorgan Dillon, Cork Ireland.

PC WORMS

Check out theis *Worms* PC cheat. All you do is aim where you want to attack then go to weapons select, move to the Uzi/minigun then press and hold F1, select the weapon still holding F1, and when ready press SPACE to fire. If done correctly your weapon will fire bazooka shells instead of bullets. Lots of them and very fast. This has been known to destroy half the landscape and take over 150 health points.
Anthony O'Connell, Merseyside.

N64 FIFA '98

SEE VICTORY CELEBRATIONS – While playing on FIFA '98, go to player exit mode, pick Japan and enter NORIE (all capitals) as the player name. After this the player will celebrate. So now go to *Road to World Cup '98* and press Z – trigger + left – C + up – C together. You will see a new screen, so choose from A to H to see 8 different endings.
Chris Davis,

Arcade MORTAL KOMBAT 4

I recently played *Mortal Kombat 4* and spent 2 hours trying to find weapons and fatalities. I have kept these secret for so long...
WEAPONS – These can be pulled out in the middle of a match. To pull out a weapon:
LUI KING – Back, forward, low kick.
SONYA – Forward, forward, low kick.
REPTICE – Back, back, low kick.
RAIDEN – Forward, back, high punch.
SCORPION – Forward, forward, high kick.
SUB ZERO – Down, forward, high kick.
REIKO – Down, back, high punch.
FUJIN – Back, back, low punch.
KAI – Down, back, low punch.
TANYA – Forward, forward, high kick.
QUAN CHI – Down, back, high kick.
JAREK – Forward, forward, high punch.
JOHNNY CAGE – Forward, down, forward, low kick.
JAX – Down, forward, high punch.
SHINNOK – Back, forward, low punch.
FATALITIES – Prison stage fatality to do this .
LUI KING – Forward, forward, back, low punch.
SONYA – Down, down, back, back, high kick.
REPTICE – Down, forward,forward, low punch.
RAIDEN – Down, forward, back, block.
SCORPION – Forward, forward, down, down, low kick.
SHINNOK – Down, down, forward, high kick.
FUJIN – Down, down, down, high kick.
KAI – Forward, forward, down, block.
QUAN CHI – Forward, forward, down, high punch.
JAREK – Forward, down, forward, high kick.
JOHNNY CAGE – Down, down, forward, forward, high kick.
JAX – Forward, forward, back, low kick.
Steven Wilson, Sheffield

GB COMMANDER CONSTRUCTION

To get the *Commander Construction* cheat, click on a construction unit, press enter and the message bar will come up, click on the commander and press enter again. The commander can build whatever the other construction unit could.
1. Build a VALKYRIE/ATLAS and a ROACH/INVADER. Then load the ROACH/INVADER onto your VALKYRIE/ATLAS and fly into enemy territory. KABOOM!!! nice and easy.
2. On skirmish find an enemy commander, build a VALKYRIE/ATLAS and load him on. Fly into a different players base. Bigger KABOOM!!!
A Kong, Stockport.

Come on, be a Game Spong!

This is your chance to join the ranks of the GM Secrets Service and prove what a thoroughly sinful gamesplaying bloke/lass you are. Send us your tips, cheats, codes, hints and just plain old in-game quirks and we'll print them each issue. All of us know at least one game a bit *too* well – our Cathy just loves *Ecco the Dolphin* – but that's something to be proud of. So go on, prove to everyone what a top game spong YOU are! This is set to become THE most comprehensive source of tips you can get your sweaty little hands on...

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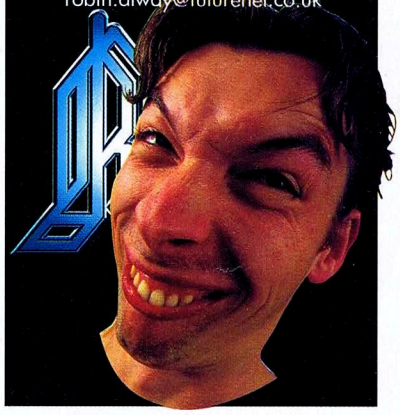

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TEKKEN 3

PLAY-TEST #4

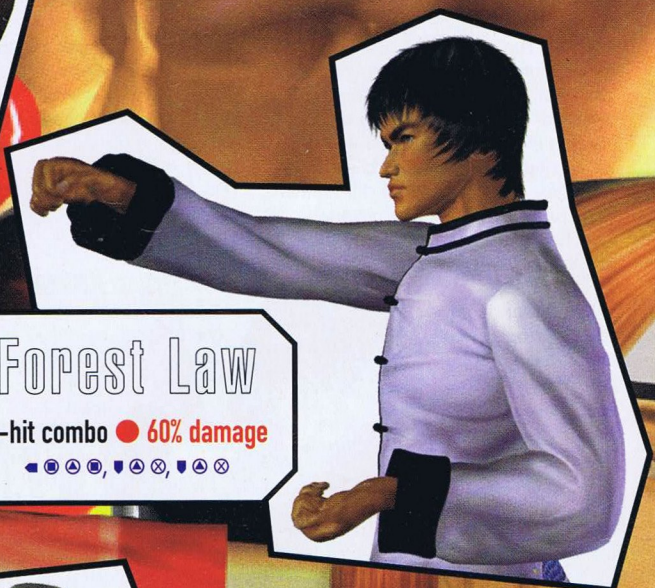
SIGNATURE COMBOS

In the previous months' play-testing we've shown you pretty much everything that Tekken 3 has to offer. So now – like your best mate lending you the money to buy those trainers you've always been after – we're going to make your life complete with the first batch of moves. This month, we bring you the signature combos for each of the main characters, with more devastating stuff to follow next month.

Lei Wulong
7-hit combo ● 60% damage

Eddy Gordo
5-hit combo ● 59% damage
While rising from a crouch

Jin Kazama
8-hit combo ● 66% damage



Forest Law
7-hit combo ● 60% damage

King
6-hit combo ● 44% damage

Paul Phoenix
7-hit combo ● 60% damage

PLAY-TEST #4

TEKKEN 3

Hwoarang

7-hit combo ● 64% damage

►◉◉, ◉►, ▲, ►⊗, ◉

Kuma & Panda

4-hit combo ● 72% damage

►►▲, ◄◉, ►▣, ►▣+▲

Julia Chang

8-hit combo ● 87% damage

▣▲▣, ►►▲, ▼◣▣▲, ►►▣◉

Gun Jack

6-hit combo ● 75% damage

◣▣▲▣▲, when in full crouch ▣▲

Bryan Fury

6-hit combo ● 93% damage

◄▲◉, ►►, ◄⊗▲▣, ►►▲

Ogre & True Ogre

6-hit combo ● 85% damage

While rising from crouch

▲, ◄◉◣▣▣▣▲

Heihachi Mishima

7-hit combo ● 71% damage

►►⊗, ►▼◣▲, ◉, ◉, ▣▲▲▲+▣

Yoshimitsu

7-hit combo ● 70% damage

◣▲, ◄◉, ◉, ◄◉◉, ►►⊗◉

Ling Xiaoyu

4-hit combo ● 43% damage

While rising from a crouch press ▲, when facing away press ⊗+◉ ⊗+◉, ▼◉, while rising from a crouch ◉

Nina Williams

7-hit combo ● 64% damage

◣◉⊗, ◣▣, ◣◉, ▼▣◉, ►►⊗

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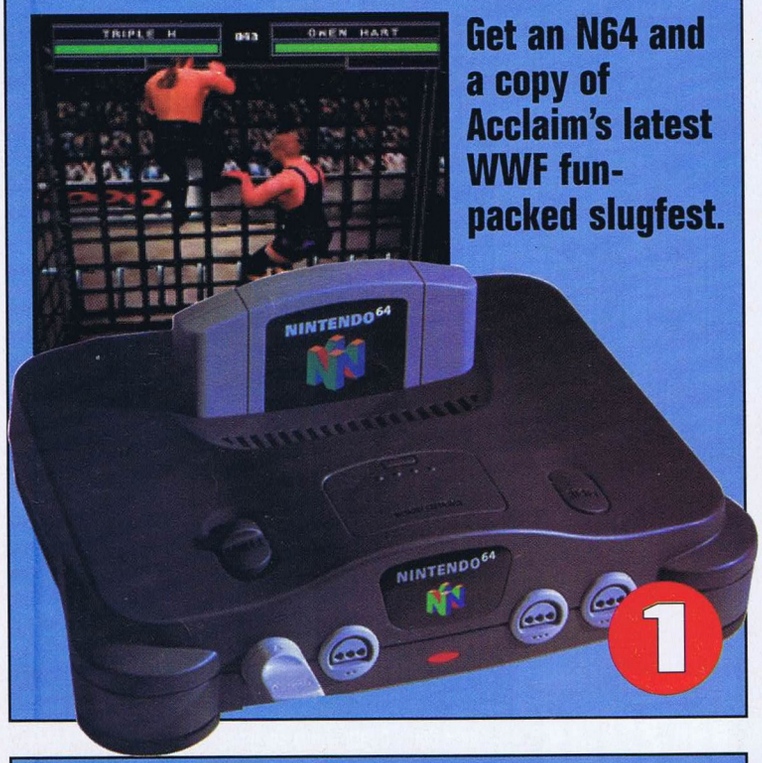

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That's gotta hurt! Win Sony's grey box and a copy of *WWF Warzone*.

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Rare's platform wonder is going to be topping the charts for months to come – and you can win it!

FULL REVIEW PAGE 38

3

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Find out why we reckon this is one of the best strategy games of all time and get a cool *Commandos* T-shirt.

FULL REVIEW PAGE 44

4

O WIN . . .

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PC

The entire X-Files web site on a CD. Every fact, figure and story is right here!

5

TEN COPIES OF X-FILES: THE GAME

FULL REVIEW PAGE 48

PC

We loved it. So will you – especially if you get it for free. If we laugh, it's yours.

6

I WANNA WIN! ★ I WANNA WIN! ★ I WANNA WIN! ★

Name: .....

Address: .....

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Age: .....

Prize number: .....

Joke .....

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Return to: You're having a laugh 71 • GamesMaster Magazine • Future Publishing • 30 Monmouth St • Bath • BA1 2BW

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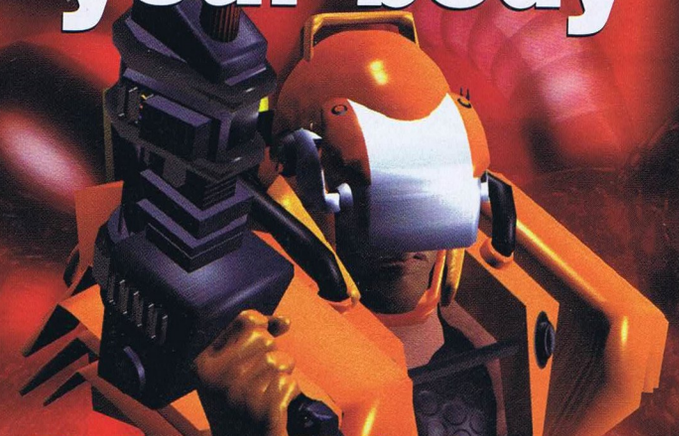
Aliens want to harvest your body



But we'll help you kick their butts first

BODY HARVEST

N64 interviews the people behind the most hard core N64 game yet.

PLUS exclusive pictures of Silicon Valley and Castlevania 64, a massive guide to Zelda, and the biggest and best Banjo-Kazooie review in the world!

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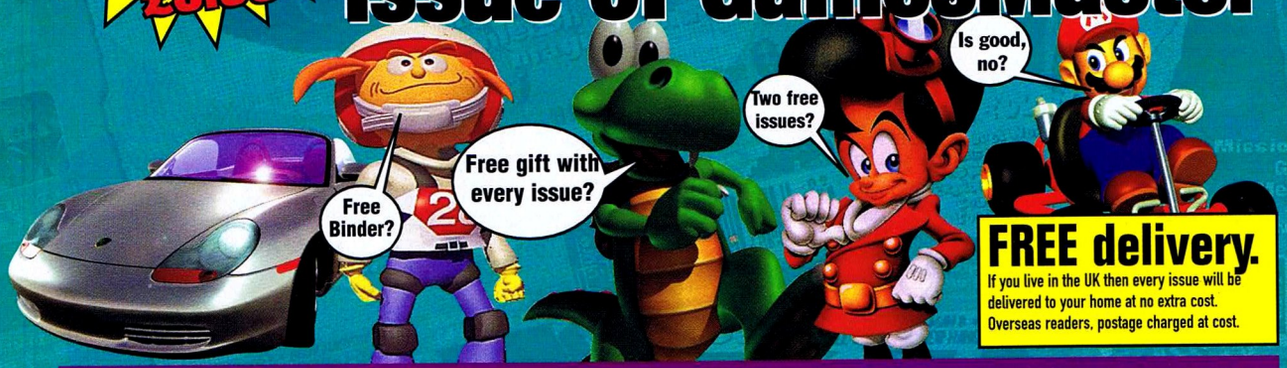

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Back Issues

OK, calm down! Take a deep breath! So, you've missed a few issues... there is still hope! Pick up the phone and call those lovely folk at GamesMaster Towers. They'll have it winging its way to you in a matter of hours!

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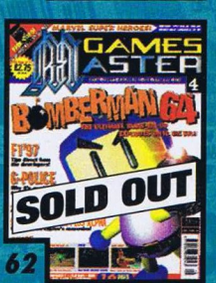

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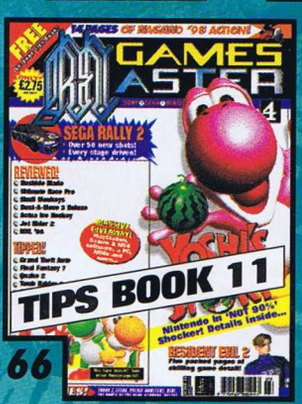

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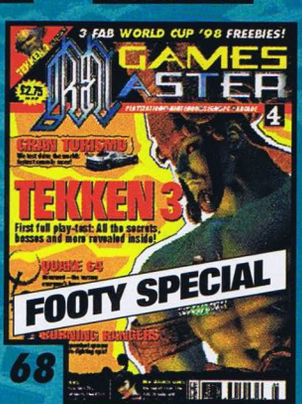
Grand Theft Auto, Final Fantasy 7 and Quake 2 all get the GM busted treatment. There's a Winter sports special and a big Res Evil 2 special...

67

The definitive Resident Evil 2 review and the eight-page Raccoon City Survivor's guide. Bushido Blade, GTA and Quake 2 are sorted in our tips pages.



68

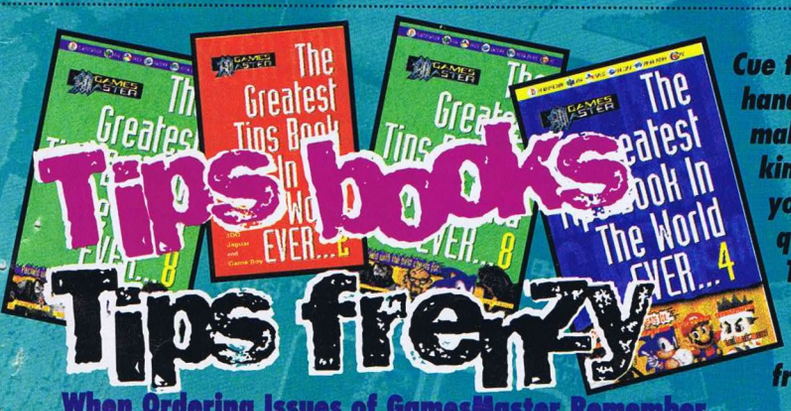
The ultimate Tekken 3 playtest with all the secrets and bosses. The solution to Resident Evil 2 and a great footy supplement and World Cup '98 wallchart.

69

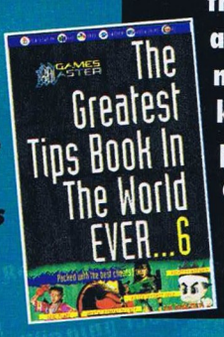
An in-depth look at Turok 2, Parasite Eve, Mission: Impossible and all the big names at the Tokyo Game Show. A Tekken 3 play-test and Res Evil 2 tips.

70

The full amazing facts on Metal Gear Solid! Every UK console game rated in the pull-out Gamers Bible plus World Cup '98 review and Gran Turismo tips.



Cue tips: large tips, small tips, handy tips and dandy tips. Tips to make you play like a king and tips to help you mince like a queen (not really). The red hot tipperage found in this vast array of tip books is free only with GM.



You need a rest. Why not dive into the calm waters of the ocean of gaming awareness, cast your net for oysters of knowledge with their pearls of wisdom and end the day on the golden drenched beach of gaming smuggery?

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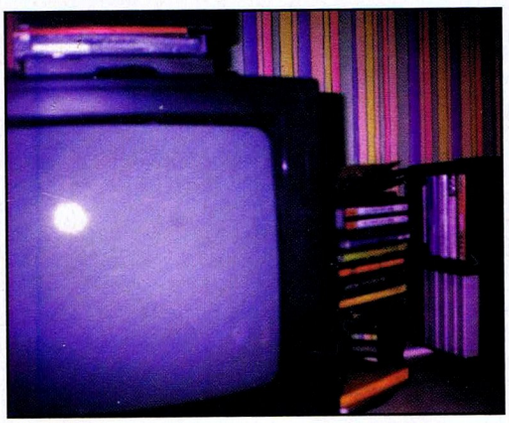
g-Mail

GamesMaster Towers has once again been awash with barking mad letters from across the globe. Let us know what you think of some of the letters below. Or maybe there's something else you'd like to rant about...

SCREENSHOT, NOT GOT

Dear *GM*
Congratulations on one of the best magazines that has ever existed! I agree with all your reviews and specials. I want to ask you how you get your brilliant screenshots? I've enclosed one of my own screenshots of *Resident Evil*. Your mag is full of them and all I get is a crummy picture of a blank TV screen! Do you use a special camera? Do you record it and then do something hi-tech with a PC? I really want some marvellous homemade pictures of decapitated zombies and lovely Lara.
Ben Whorwood, Newquay



We tried the same Happy Snapper approach too, Ben. But having to wait in the rain outside the one hour developers gave Les a nasty dose of the flu. All that sneezing did nothing for his night stalking habits, so we invested in a bit of expensive techno wizardry. By running leads to the TV and a Apple Mac we can get screenshots of any part of the game that we want. So put away your camera, you've got plenty of great pictures in GamesMaster anyway!

DAFT VADER

Dear *GamesMaster*
I am Lord Vader of Sith, me and the Emperor have been tracking down the Rebels supply of Tamagotchis and any of those pesky freedom fighters I find with one get a Light Saber where the Sun don't shine. I've got Mr Fett to help me (Bobba to his mates). May the Force be with you.
D. Vader, Deep Space

Mmm, some readers with influence... not before time. Not that convincing, mind.

Star Letter

GAMES CONSOLE
Win a game of your choice care of the folks at Games Console...
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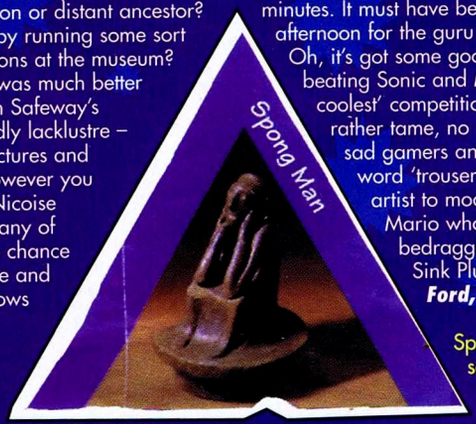
SPONG, DOM AND NICOISE...

Hey there Catpeople,
While wandering around Norwich Castle Museum I came across this blatant rip off of your James Spong. Perhaps some relation or distant ancestor? Maybe you could retaliate by running some sort of feature based on attractions at the museum?

Your World Cup chart was much better than the one that came with Safeway's magazine. Theirs is decidedly lacklustre – it doesn't even have any pictures and they're always a bonus. However you do fall down in the Salad Nicoise department and I'm sure many of your readers would like the chance to have some free wardrobe and make-over advice. God knows they need it.

Hey, while browsing through the half-price shelf of my local store my eye was caught by a chirpy young man beaming proudly from a book cover. The angelic, freshly-scrubbed, 'just-done-my-GCSEs' face belonged to Mr Showbiz himself, Dominik Diamond. I bought the book, 'Dominik Diamond's Guide to Videogames and How to Survive them' for only £2 and finished it in 25 minutes. It must have been written on a slow afternoon for the guru of all things videogamish. Oh, it's got some good points, Bob Holness beating Sonic and Mario in a 'who's the coolest' competition. Apart from that it's all rather tame, no innuendoes, no derision of sad gamers and not one mention of the word 'trouser'. They even had to get an artist to mock up pictures of Sonic and Mario who ended up looking like a bedraggled Yorkshire Terrier and a Sink Plunger.
Ford, Lee-on Solent



Spong man's just waiting for someone to invent the console. Shame he didn't live long enough, eh?

WISHY YOSHI

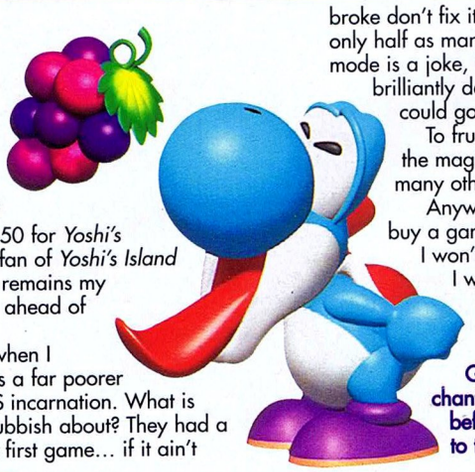
Dear *GM*
For the first time in my life, I have begun to doubt the programming prowess of the great Nintendo. Last month I forked out £50 for *Yoshi's Story*. I was a huge fan of *Yoshi's Island* on the SNES, which remains my favourite platformer, ahead of even *Mario 64*.

I was horrified when I realised that this was a far poorer game than the SNES incarnation. What is all this fruit eating rubbish about? They had a top formula with the first game... if it ain't broke don't fix it. The game is criminally easy, with only half as many levels as the first version. The Story mode is a joke, six dull levels compared to 48 brilliantly designed levels in the first game. I could go on... and I will...

To frustrate me even more there are none of the magical Nintendo touches that made so many other games classics.

Anyway, great mag, and I promise never to buy a game without GM's divine consent.

I won't buy games before a GM review...
I won't buy games before a GM review,I won't buy games bef...
Dan Hemming, Wallington



Good work Dan. You should be chanting that every morning for an hour before breakfast. We advise all readers to take that mantra to their hearts.

AND REMEMBER

Whet your appetite

- **YES** *It makes my blood boil?*
- **YES** *Gaming glories...*
- **YES** *The good, bad and plain ugly*
- **YES** *Photos and weird stuff you've found?*

Wet your pants

- **NO** *Lets see Les naked (once is enough)...*
- **NO** *Gis Cathy's telephone number...*
- **NO** *Send me things...*
- **NO** *Gis something free...*

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REVOLUTIONARIES

As you probably know, we're always looking to improve *GamesMaster* even more and as it's your magazine, we want to know what you think of its development. So, please name your three favourite bits of this issue in order of preference – they can be specific pages or sections in general. Whatever – just be honest...

1

2

3

And let us know which bit you didn't like this month (and why)...

Also, tell us which three areas of GamesMaster you'd improve (and how)...

1

2

3

Please cut out or photocopy this completed form and send it to: Revolutionaries, Letters, GamesMaster Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. It'll help us to help you.

Win some stuff!

Every issue we'll put the Revolutionaries replies in a dirty great bag – the first one plucked receives a hoofing pile of gaming gear!

AND DON'T FORGET YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS

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71

RESIDENT FEEBLE

Dear *GM*
I was looking through some old issues of GM the other day and I came across an article about *Resident Evil 2* in issue 55 that must have come out in May 1997. It was very cool at the time because it showed loads of screenshots and drawings of the characters. The game's characters had different clothing and I understand how this could have changed two years later. But when I started to look closer at the screenshots, I couldn't recognise any of them. None of the rooms you showed back in 1997 were actually in *Resident Evil 2*. What the Hell were you thinking? Were you just spinning us a line? Why did Capcom have to make those changes. What happened to the original game, is it still floating around somewhere?
Rosalind Elgar, Leigh-On-Sea

Leon and Claire certainly look very different and true we certainly haven't stumbled across the firing range that was on one of the screenshots. But do you really expect a game that still has eight months of development time not to make plenty of changes? That's why it's one of the greatest gaming experiences around. The article certainly gives you plenty of accurate information and the screenshots give you a flavour of the game.

DREAM-ON

Dear *GM*
I just had to write to tell you about the new Sega console, the Dreamcast. It's 128-Bit with capabilities of 3,000,000 polygons per second. When I say "WOW", I really mean it. It's also capable of displaying revolutionary new types of 3D graphics, human movement, fog, water effects, lighting and shading.

The machine is around 50% faster and more powerful than the current arcade module 3 board. That means arcade perfect conversions and extra power to improve the game's speed and increase the overall size of the game which would also take advantage of the new storage system that Sega are using.

All of this sounds quite amazing. Rest assured, GM will be bringing you all the news when it's officially announced.
Chris J Haig, Taunton

We won't only be bringing you the news when it's officially announced but all the juicy gossip that surrounds this machine as it leaks from Sega HQ. Check out page 8.

MARIO RAGE!

Dear *GamesMaster*
Please help me! I'm going insane. My mum bought me an N64 for Easter with *Mario Kart 64* and ever since I've been trying to complete it. Then when I finally do those folk at Nintendo manage to strap another level on!

Since I've only got one controller I've had to play the game against other characters. They enjoy smashing me into the water or the lava, hitting me with shells or skidding me across the track with banana skins. It makes me so mad I want revenge!

So, I had an idea for a game. A *Mario Kombat* where you get to beat the brown stuff out of those horrid little creatures. So where do I send the idea? How do I let Nintendo know? I really can't wait to rip Toad to shreds and crush the Princess under the sole of my shoe! Ha, ha, ha revenge is so sweet!
Thank you, thank you... thank you!
Emma Haran, Mitcham

Wow, Emma, that's a whole lot of aggression, girl! I think you need to find a more constructive way to vent this temper of yours than plotting ways to finish off computer generated apparitions! Have you ever considered All-in Wrestling? Rodeo Riding? Sky Diving?

WHAT'S YOUR PERSPECTIVE?

Dear *GM*
For the past year I've seen many mags making the same mistake. Don't you games journalists know anything? In your reply to Craig MacDonald's letter in issue 69 you gave totally the wrong answer to his question about first, second or third-person perspectives. True in first-person games you look through the eyes of the character. But *Tomb Raider* doesn't use a third-person view nor do driving games (except *Micro Machines v3*).

In third-person games the camera is not directly attached to the character or vehicle you're controlling (ie. *Res Evil* – which you correctly pointed out).

Tomb Raider uses a second-person perspective along with the behind the car views used in most driving games, *Croc, Tenchu, Cool Boarders* etc...

As I mentioned before, you're not the only mag to have made this mistake but you are one of the worst.
Paul D, e-mail

What nonsense. We'll say it once again for the hard of thinking... there is no such thing as a second-person perspective. If you're not looking through the character's eyes then you've got a third-person perspective. Whether the camera follows the character or not is an interesting distinction but it doesn't effect the game's camera perspective.

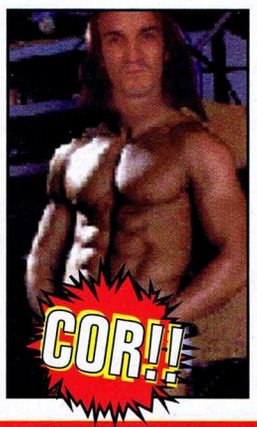
NAKED LES

Dear *GM*

Even though I am degrading my excellent reputation by writing to your feeble attempt at a (cough,) ahem magazine (cough). The thing is I am in dire need of your wisdom. Some ugly shmucks ripped up our copy of GM and we need your help. So could you please send me one of the following...

1. An Ion Cannon
2. Summon Materia
3. A picture of Les naked
4. A life
5. *Command & Conquer: Tiberian Sun* preview disc

Stephen Canavan, Derry



Ion cannons and Summon Materia are the product of the fertile imagination of games developers... they don't exist. There are no pictures of Les naked in existence and the world is a happier place for it. We have, however, provided an artists impression of what he'd look like after a year in the gym, eating properly and exposing himself to the sun. If you want a life then you'll have to get it yourself. C&C disc... NO!

YOU LYING £@*%^}$!

Dear *GM*

In issue 66 you said that *Gex 3D: Enter the Gecko* would be coming out on the PC. I raced down to the shops but was told that they didn't have a copy of the PC version. So when's it coming out GamesMaster, I'm totally gutted!

Owain Jones, Gwent

Well keep looking Owain because it's out in the shops right now. You'll have to take a look in a few different games shops so keep your eye out. And there're plenty of other great games heading towards your PC. Just check out some of the reviews and specials in this issue. Les and Robin are getting very excited about *Commandos* on page 44.

TO SWAP OR NOT TO SWAP?

Dear *GamesMaster*

I've got a bit of a problem... I've got the chance to trade in my PlayStation with a load of games for an N64. Do you think I should?

I'm really starting to miss Dominik Diamond and the great Gamesmaster TV show. By the way my Dad thinks you make up all the letters. I told him you didn't but why don't you prove him wrong and print mine?

Jaime Acutt, Honiton

Pffff... made up! Never! We get far too many barking mad letters and could never make that kind of nonsense up! As for the PSX/N64 swap... don't bother. You'll have to start building up your games collection again (carts are more expensive than CDs) and you'll need to invest in a new set of controllers. So, unless you've recently won loads of money, the answer is no!

As for Dominik Diamond, well his memory still lives and if you take a look at the Star Letter you'll see that bargain book stores around the country are carrying on his good work in his absence. Anyway, more fictional correspondence next issue.

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THANKS! England and Scotland's World Cup teams for stopping us from doing any work for a few weeks.

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FINAL FANTASY8

More new pics! More info!

WILD 9

GM gets to grips with Shiny's latest epic

SPYRO THE DRAGON

Have Sony at last got a Mario beater?

NEXT MONTH IN GAMESMASTER

SEPTEMBER ISSUE 72

- **Dreamcast – more games revealed. Developers talk to GM.**

- **Mortal Kombat 4 – Blood-soaked 3D beat-em-up frenzy**
- **Free tips book**
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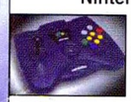

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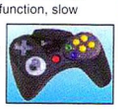

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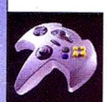

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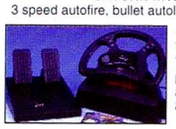

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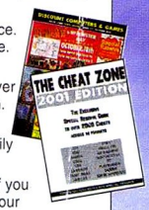

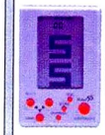

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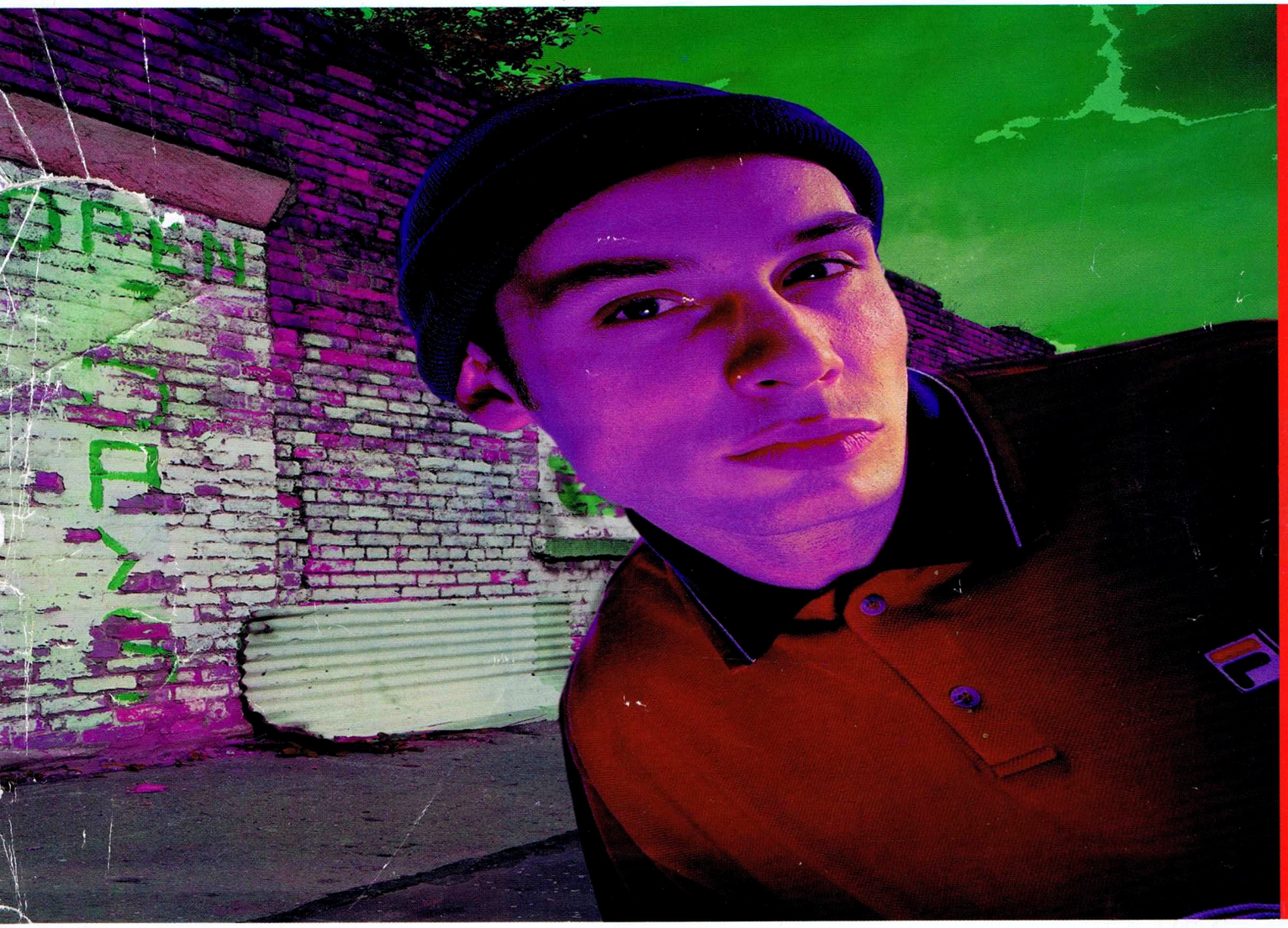

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